"COME ON, GIRLS; GET SET!" CRIED RAND.—*Page 55.*

THE CHIMES OF DASKAM HIGH

By

AGNES MILLER

ILLUSTRATED BY

ELISABETH B. WARREN

BOSTON

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THE CHIMES OF DASKAM HIGH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCING JOCELYN, DASKAM, AND ME

THIS story would never have happened, and all the patriotic fervor in the world wouldn't have made our chimes at Daskam High School play the national anthem, if Jocelyn Gay hadn't been such a girl for poking into queer half-hidden places and finding the most exciting things there that nobody had ever heard of. But when we all told her so, that wonderful day the chimes finally played "The Star-Spangled Banner," she would only say:

"I never could have done a thing without my guardian, Viola Bruce!"

Now of course that is all nonsense in the first place, and, in the second, wouldn't I

make a marvellous guardian for Jocelyn! Why, she could pick me up under one arm and run off with me, and sometimes she does! She's always ready for everything, and daring and surprising, and a year older than I am, besides, though we are in the same class, the second year. But somehow Jocelyn always seems to rely on me, and insists on my sharing her adventures.

Of course you want to know what she looks like. I think she's very pretty. She has straight brown hair, lots of it, long and very thick, and she wears it very simply, just tied back with a black bow, for Jocelyn never fusses much with dress, and she has big hazel eyes and red cheeks, and of course you've guessed that she's tall and strong. At school they call us "the second-year twins," which is a joke by Rand Potter, a boy in our class who is *always* very funny. It would take nearly two of me to make one of Jocelyn, and I have gray eyes and bobbed curly yellow hair—she kindly calls it "golden."

We both live on Poplar Avenue in Daskam, a pretty street of homes which takes its name from the big shimmering green-and-silver trees planted on both sides of it, and our houses are only two blocks apart. Jocelyn lives in a big rambling brown house on a corner, with a tennis-court on the lawn, where she and her three brothers, all older than she is, play all day long whenever they get a chance; and I live in a little white house in the middle of the block, set back from the street in a bright garden, with hollyhocks and larkspur and marigolds lining the walk. I have just one cunning little sister ten years old, four years younger than I am, and of course Jocelyn and I each have two parents, and they all are very nice!

Well, when Jocelyn came bounding into my house early one Saturday afternoon at the end of last October, and said she was going down to Kendall Street and I was coming too, I didn't mind, even though she dragged me away from the big tapestry armchair and six cookies and a thrilling new

book about a girl who went away to boarding-school and had the most exciting adventures. She sat down in the chair and ate three cookies and said she would read the book while I got ready. But I relinquished them all without a murmur. Jocelyn doesn't need any boarding-school in order to have adventures. She attracts them herself as she goes along.

"Just get your hat, Viola," she called after me as I left the living-room. "You don't need a coat; it's ever so warm in the sun."

"Oh, that's good," said I joyfully, without thinking.

"You wouldn't put one on even if it were cold, as I well know!" she instantly replied, grinning provokingly. "Vain thing!"

Then she dodged. As I say, I am small and so have a short reach, and I missed fire that time completely. So I laughed, too, and went off to get my hat. I had to admit that what she said had much truth in it. I had on my new fall school-frock, and I

simply hated the thought of covering it up with a coat. It was green jersey, with a pleated skirt and a straight overblouse, which had a row of buttons down the front, and the neck was finished with a little white-satin collar embroidered in red. I had picked it out myself most carefully at Harlan's department store. My mother said it was practical, and Jocelyn said it was striking, and Rand Potter, who loves to tease, informed me that green was just my color, so altogether I liked that dress pretty well. I quickly got my hat, and took the new book away from Jocelyn, who was by that time quite interested in it, and we set out for Kendall Street.

We turned off Poplar Avenue into State Street, and went east in the direction of the harbor, for Kendall Street is far downtown. Daskam, where we both were born and have always lived, is quite a large, and, we think, quite a beautiful town, with wide streets running out on a long headland lying between a sheltered harbor on the south and

the open sea on the north. The harbor is always full of ships, many of them ocean-going, and railroads from many distant parts of the State converge at this port. So our little city is always alive with trade and traffic, and full of visitors passing in and out, which we think makes life in Daskam very interesting.

Therefore, as usual, for we had often been over the same ground together before, Jocelyn and I enjoyed our walk through the city to Kendall Street. First we passed the charming old-fashioned homes on State Street, set back among their picturesque bare brown trees on lawns that were still green in the fall sunshine. Then came a stretch of apartments and small homes with tiny yards and babies playing in them. Then, set off by itself in splendid grounds on the crest of Daskam Ridge, as the summit of the headland is called, we passed the fine Macklyn House, our best hotel, and right after it came the other hotels, and then the shops began.

We slowed down as these came in sight, for Jocelyn, who just loves to take photographs, and has finally succeeded, after many struggles, in learning how to take rather nice ones, wanted to do some window-shopping. Her mother had told her there was a special display of photographic goods in Harlan's window, featuring a sale to be held the next week, and as she wanted a new album for her latest masterpieces, and was going to get her monthly allowance on Monday, which would be the first of November, she wanted to pick out the album which this unusually happy combination of circumstances would allow her to buy. So we lingered before Harlan's window for several minutes, and it was then and there that our adventures began.

I say "ours," because, while Jocelyn had had the idea of going to Kendall Street, I unwittingly made the next move in the series of things about to happen. We had both been looking down the window to our left, discussing the merits of black and brown

leather covers, when Jocelyn suddenly clutched my arm, only to find it in the act of clutching hers. Right alongside of us, farther down the sidewalk, looking into the same window quite absorbedly, was another girl, a perfect stranger, who had on *my* green dress!

I was absolutely mad and horrified, and I will admit it honestly. Jocelyn, in the same circumstances, would have thought it the greatest joke on herself, and would probably have burst out laughing, and maybe made the other girl laugh, too. Maybe it would have been a good thing if I could have done that, but I couldn't, and Jocelyn knew it. I hardly realized what had happened before she had rushed me along behind that other girl, who didn't have so much as a chance to turn around. The very first minute we were out of earshot I groaned aloud.

"Ugh! I'll never enjoy wearing this dress again if everybody else has one like it!" said I, mortified to death to find that,

after all my pains, somebody else had taken a liking to the same thing.

"Don't be a goose, Vi. You seem to me to exaggerate," said Jocelyn kindly. "Anyway, it looks lots better on a little blonde than on that great tall black-haired girl. She ought to have known better than to get it!"

"I suppose they make it in all sizes," I sighed, trying to use my mind to console myself, which is often a good way to do. "Maybe that other girl would have felt the same shock if she had seen me, and, after all, it is a very artistic dress."

"Yes, you both have wonderful taste!" grinned Jocelyn mischievously.

So I really had to laugh, and then we both laughed again because I had been so silly. Then we both laughed some more because we had seen another girl in my dress. Then we passed the city hall and lovely Rose-Tree Park and the public library, and came to the beginning of the long stretch of office-

buildings at the end of which lies Kendall Street.

"Well, I forgot!" said I suddenly. "What are we coming down here for, Jocelyn? Anything particular?"

"To buy books, dear child, story-books! Kendall Street, as you may not know, is full of second-hand book-shops," replied Jocelyn instructively.

Naturally I knew that! Why, she and I had been there before—I was going to say hundreds of times. It is a narrow, curving old street full of old-fashioned office-buildings, mostly occupied by wholesale merchants who have their warehouses along the docks running along the harbor which lies just behind. But about every third one of the little miscellaneous shops that line the street is a second-hand bookstore, with stalls on the sidewalk containing books that are five, ten, fifteen, and twenty cents apiece. There is one little gray shop that is our special favorite, because it always seems to have lots of girls' books in the stalls, and we

have found ever so many splendid bargains there. So I simply replied to Jocelyn, in a dignified manner, refusing to be teased:

"Of course I know that. I mean, is there some particular book you want to get?"

"No," said she, "I don't even know whether I'll buy any at all. But I love Kendall Street, and so do you, and of course it's always fun down there, and I just felt we ought to have some recreation!"

"Why, when we've been having so much lately?" I queried.

As that was meant for a joke, and Jocelyn understood, we both laughed once more, but this time very, very ruefully. And so that you may understand both the joke and the ruefulness, I ought to do a little explaining. We had been having, and were still having, the most terrible troubles at Daskam High School. And while perhaps in one way they were no worse than those which other girls and boys have in school,—indeed, I've always wondered if other schools hadn't gone through much the same experience as

had lately been ours,—we felt a great sense of responsibility about our difficulties, because our school organization has a great deal of self-government, and our principal likes to have us deal with and settle our own problems if we can. And we want to, too. But this time we had pretty hard sledding!

CHAPTER II

OUR TROUBLES

In the first place, the school was going to move into a new building just across the street, for the town owns two square blocks up on Daskam Ridge, and while this plan was in itself highly desirable, certain of what might be called the attendant circumstances had been rather disastrous. Our handsome big new colonial red-brick building, with its white-stone trimmings and fine modern equipment,—such a contrast to the shabby old-fashioned brownstone barracks in which we were at present crowded,—was to have been finished during the previous summer, and we were to have started school there in September. But a building strike had delayed work on it for weeks and weeks, in fact, the work had but lately been resumed, and the contractor could not promise us the building before New Year's. This difficulty had naturally been a great disappointment.

Nevertheless, even when the work stopped unexpectedly in the spring, we had gone right ahead with some plans we had under way, feeling sure that ultimately things would come out right. The school was very anxious to present a gift to the new building, so, in order to raise funds we got up a street fair on the four streets around our old building, with all sorts of fancy decorated booths and everybody in costume, with side-shows and music and refreshments. Everything cost either five or ten cents, and we never had so much fun in our lives, besides making one hundred and fifty dollars! Then we decided that as soon as the dues for the four classes were paid in the fall, each class would add twenty-five dollars to the fund, making two hundred and fifty dollars in all, which would buy quite a worthy gift at the rate of just about a dollar per student. And then, about a month ago, just after the classes had paid in their allotments, and just as the work on the new building was getting under way again, came the second disaster.

There was a rule that we must not go into the building by ourselves for fear we might in some way interfere with the operations of the workmen, so we watched the progress of the work from afar from day to day with the most intense interest. The thing we liked best we couldn't see except in bits from a front second-story window in our old school. It was a mural painting which was being executed above the first landing on the main staircase in the central hall of the new building. It was being donated by a "boy" who had graduated from Daskam thirty years before. He was paying a famous artist to do the work, and sometimes we could see this Mr. Steven Pollock, a pleasant-looking gray-haired gentleman, in the hall, painting away in his long buff smock. We also managed to make out that the picture represented boys and girls studying and taking part in sports just as we all did every day, and the farthest-sighted among us had descried an American flag on one side of the background and our

green-and-white Daskam High School banner on the other. Well, not two weeks after Mr. Pollock had started to paint that picture, it was found one morning—*smudged!*

I needn't waste time telling how, for nobody had ever found out. All that could be discovered positively was that it was not smudged when Mr. Pollock and the workmen left the building at half-past four the previous evening, and the watchman had heard nothing all night. But for two excellent reasons it was thought to have been damaged by some student. One was that on the floor of the hall, in front of the door, was found a brand-new standard blank-book of the kind we all use; the other, that there were several little telltale trails of dried gravel along the hall, such as was found nowhere in the vicinity except on our running-track, which is used by students only.

Everybody was terribly shocked by the discovery, and also very angry that such a beautiful donation should have been spoiled

before it was even completed, and in such a sneaky way. And, naturally enough, the people who were the loudest in expressing distress and horror were those who composed our leading set.

Of course, as in all schools, we have a leading set in the upper classes which runs most student affairs. Ours consists of Doris Hart and Archer Macklyn and their friends. I always thought Doris simply fascinating, with her big dancing dark eyes, though Jocelyn didn't like her so well. She was always very kind to me, and let me serve with her at the street fair, in her beautiful wisteria booth, which took first prize in the votes for the most artistic stall. Still, I rather wondered about some of those girls and boys she went with, though I kept my thoughts to myself, until I accidentally discovered that some of the other younger students were wondering, too. I think anybody might have been puzzled.

Those boys and girls acted as if they owned the whole world. That set first got

into swing when the street fair was started, and it is true that the idea of having one was theirs, for they always had plenty of brilliant ideas. But they grabbed all the good positions, like presiding over booths and acting in side-shows, and made people not in their crowd do all the hard work, like the decorating and selling programs, until our principal, Mr. Lane, had to make Doris, who was chairman of the whole fair, reassign about half the parts. After this was done, a little grumbling that had started among some of the students stopped. Our leading set was really very much admired.

But when we came back to school in the fall, there was trouble again. The constitution of our student organization says we must hold a meeting in September, and Archer Macklyn, who, like Doris, is a senior, and is the president of the student body, never called one until the seventh of October! There was some comment. I remember talking to Doris about it. Jocelyn was there, too.

"I think this is a queer way for Archer to start in holding office, don't you, Doris?" I said, rather perplexed.

"Oh, that's only a by-law about holding the meeting in September," said Doris carelessly, twirling a card that she had in her hand. She had been telling us about it. It was a warning-card in her advanced chemistry course, and she had got it, though we had been back at school only a month. She is really very bright, but she hadn't had a chance to study much lately. She said her crowd had been going just everywhere.

"Well, I don't know what a by-law is exactly," said Jocelyn, who is extremely honest and rather headlong, "but I guess it's part of the constitution, isn't it? What right has Archer to disregard it?"

Doris looked cross. She didn't like Jocelyn much then.

"The constitution isn't very practical," she said loftily.

"Why don't we have a meeting and change it, then?" said I; and I really did

not mean to be rude, for I didn't see what she meant, and she hurt my feelings by looking at me coldly. Jocelyn, however, did see, and Doris's look at me made her mad.

"You mean Archer Macklyn doesn't think it's practical to go to all the work the meeting would mean while the weather is so fine he can drive your crowd everywhere in his father's car!" she snapped.

Doris glared, and tossed her head, and walked off without speaking.

"Oh, Jocelyn!" I protested. "She'll think you're terribly unsympathetic when she just got that warning-card."

"Well, I am," said Jocelyn flatly, though really she isn't in the least. Maybe she realized she had been very abrupt. "She's not the only one of that set that's due for a warning-card, for all their brilliant ideas. Do you know John Parker's off the hockey team, and Frances Walton is off the girls' basket-ball team, and Larry Hill is off the track team? All debarred for deficiency in study."

"O horrors!" said I, for this was bad news of our best athletes. "I hadn't heard. How do you know?"

"I know because I read bulletin-boards and talk to other people. I don't just sit around thinking about my marks and my manners and my music!"

But she gave me a hug as she said it, and I laughed, too, because we are such good friends we are free to tell each other what we really think about each other in a good-humored way, and I realized that I was not naturally very much interested in school matters of a public character, though they were Jocelyn's meat and drink, as the saying goes. So I made up my mind to try to be more public-spirited thereafter, and said:

"I'm afraid our leading set won't be so popular as usual if they get themselves debarred from the teams, and Daskam High loses inter-school matches on that account."

"It's more likely the faculty won't be so

popular for debarring such popular people!" prophesied Jocelyn.

But there was no immediate chance to find out the effect of this action, because the smudge on the mural painting was discovered, and the whole school was in a turmoil and talked about nothing else for two entire days. On the third day Mr. Lane addressed us on the subject in assembly, as we had been hoping he would.

"Girls and boys," he began, "the most thorough investigation possible has been made regarding the injury to the mural painting in the new building, which has so greatly shocked all of us, and there can be no doubt that the damage was done by some one among you. You have already been informed by your class-teachers that any one responsible has the privilege of communicating the fact to me privately, thereby saving his or her reputation and avoiding publicity that would do no one any good, and, furthermore, maintaining the honorable name of your school. The matter has been thor-

oughly discussed by yourselves, yet no one has been willing to come forward and admit responsibility.

"But there is another very serious phase of this sad affair with which you are not acquainted," he went on, and we all listened harder than ever in great surprise. "Mr. Pollock, the distinguished artist working on that painting, is so exceedingly upset by the damage to it that it is just now a question as to whether he can be persuaded to go on with it. The damage itself can be repaired, and, I believe, without any great expense, except to reimburse the artist for his time; but Mr. Pollock feels that he has been grossly insulted, and I fear he has just legal grounds for withdrawing from the work on a charge of breach of contract. It was agreed, you see, that his work in the new building should be fully protected until it was completed, and instead it has been spoiled by"—Mr. Lane paused impressively, and we all hung on his words in horror and shame, but also in interest, for

he was going to say something terrible—" by members of this community who can only be called lawbreakers. What else can you call those who break rules?"

I felt as if I had done the deed myself, and Jocelyn said afterwards that she felt the same way, and I guess everybody did. Mr. Lane noticed how sad and sorry we all were, for then he finished in just two sentences:

" Well, it is for any community to decide how fashionable it wants lawbreaking to be. As this catastrophe affects every boy and girl in this school, I'm going to let your organization decide what action you feel you could take toward some reparation." And with that he motioned Archer Macklyn up on the platform, and walked out of assembly!

Archer is a very self-possessed boy, good-looking and good-natured, always ready with his tongue and able to shine in most situations, but that time he certainly was taken by surprise, and faced us with some-

thing rather like dismay, and no wonder. It was pretty trying, being called on to preside over a most depressed meeting which hadn't an idea what to do about such a mess as that smudged painting, especially as we one and all looked at Archer as if we expected him to lead us right out of the wilderness. In fact, he was so popular that I expected he would at once make a successful appeal for a confession to Mr. Lane. But he didn't. He said:

"This is a very unfortunate situation, it seems to me, and I think the Daskam G. O." —that's the General Organization of our school—"ought to look at it as practically as possible. I think it may be up to us to offer to repair the damage, if it was caused by any one in the school, for the sake of the school's reputation."

"If it wouldn't cost too much for us to pay," amended Larry Hill, getting the floor. Larry, our ex-track star, was in the third year, and the G. O. treasurer. "We haven't endless money, you know."

Rand Potter bounced up, and, for once in his life, did not make a joke, for, with all his nonsense, he is perfectly straight. "If our reputation's really involved, we ought to pay whatever it costs," he said quite earnestly.

"Yes, sweetheart, of course," said Larry.

"Mr. President, I have the floor, have I not?" demanded Rand. Archer said he had, and told Larry he was out of order. "Then I move we appoint Wilbur Edson a committee of one to go now to Mr. Lane's office and ask the probable cost of repairing that painting."

"Second the motion!" cried Jocelyn promptly.

So we sent Wilbur forthwith. He is Rand's chum, and very fat and solemn and stately, and has very good manners, and we appreciated Rand's judgment in selecting him as a messenger. But he came back with his moon-face a yard long, and gasped:

"It'll cost—one—hundred—dollars!"

"We can't possibly do it!" cried Doris,

absolutely horrified, and she seemed to express the general opinion, for everybody had got a new shock.

"We've got to! It's our duty!" snapped Jocelyn.

Of course Doris had set her off, but she hadn't learned then how to show her colors without being so downright that people took personal offense, and I knew she had got up in a great scramble that morning, in a hurry to get to school and hear fresh news about the smudge, and her hair was flying because her hair-ribbon had nearly fallen off, and she had caught her sweater on something and ripped it, and altogether, despite her great honesty and earnestness, she looked very happy-go-lucky and not very impressive.

"Oh, we all know you're high-principled and don't care about being—what was that Mr. Lane called it? Oh, yes—*fashionable!*" whispered Doris sarcastically, and Jocelyn realized she couldn't say anything, and looked quite rebuffed.

I was provoked at both of them, and also at myself, because I just hated to get up and " speak in meeting." However, I was going to back Jocelyn. So when several other people had observed eloquently in various ways that we didn't have a hundred dollars, and so had given me a chance to think a bit, I finally hauled myself out of my seat, for I really had an idea.

" No," said I, " but we have two hundred and fifty. Of course we can hardly use the fund raised by the street fair to pay off debts, but we can take the class allotments, which come to just a hundred dollars, and use them to pay for the damage done to the painting, and perhaps try to make them up some other way later on."

Well, I leave the ensuing uproar to your imagination! But anyhow, the proposal was finally put through, for most of the students felt that we certainly couldn't buy gifts when a just debt wasn't paid, and Mr. Lane approved our action. But the poverty into which this action plunged us was a third

great calamity we were called on to suffer. And because of so many troubles the school had been quite depressed for ever so long, and had more or less lost interest in the gift. In fact, the gift committee, of which both Jocelyn and I were members, had abandoned all its plans temporarily, and hadn't met since the allotments were given up, to decide what to buy. We no longer thronged the second-story front window to look at the painting, we hadn't spirits enough to get up our usual fall excursions and class parties, and it did seem as if nobody had had a good time for years. So now you see why Jocelyn and I laughed ruefully when we agreed that we needed recreation, and gave a happy sigh of relief as our dear old Kendall Street came into view.

CHAPTER III

"YOUR BIRTHDAY FORTUNE"

We went straight to our favorite little gray shop, and, with hardly another word, started to look through the stock of young people's books on the two sidewalk stalls. A great many new books seemed to have come in since our last visit three or four weeks ago, and our attention was fully occupied for quite a long time as we each enjoyed ourselves separately by reading that which interested us most, and yet the more because each knew the other was there. Then suddenly Jocelyn called to me from behind the stall where she had strolled:

"Come and look at this with me, Viola!"

She was holding up a yellow book, quite new-looking, all covered with a rainbow-colored design of horseshoes. I ran to her side and glanced at the title. It was certainly thrilling: "Your Birthday Fortune."

"What's it about?" I cried excitedly. She opened it at random, and I saw at once that the inside was even more interesting than the outside.

Straight across each pair of opposite pages ran three equally distant parallel lines which divided each page into quarters. In each of the four left-hand sections was printing, while the right-hand page was blank. I started to read the left-hand page, and discovered that each section was headed with a date,—April 9, April 10, and so on,—and under each date was a short paragraph beginning, "You will be"—or some other prophetic statement.

"Oh!" said I; "it's a fortune for everybody, told according to each person's birthday."

"You're so bright, Viola dear! No wonder you're head of the class," exclaimed Jocelyn admiringly. "That's exactly what 'Your Birthday Fortune' is."

"Have you looked yours up?" I asked, giggling.

"Well ——"

"Of course you have!"

"Of course I don't believe it, Viola!"

"Of course not! Now do let's see what it is."

So we turned the pages to "May 8," which is her birthday, and read the following paragraph:

"You will be victorious over adverse circumstances if you develop poise. The courage and decision that lie within you should always support you and be your guide."

"How nice!" said I.

"Do you really think I have courage and decision?" asked Jocelyn, pleased.

"Indeed I do! The fortune is true already, as far as that goes."

"I wish I had poise, too," said Jocelyn wistfully. "I know I'm always in a hurry."

"Maybe you could get some," I suggested comfortingly. "Now please let's see my fortune."

This was it, under "June 4":

"With your intelligence, you should be very successful. Strive for initiative and unselfishness, and your life will be triumphant."

"Pretty good!" cried Jocelyn, and I was pleased, too.

"Are you going to buy that book?" I asked her.

"I should say so! In itself it's more than a bargain for twenty cents. Look how nice and clean it is, and so entertaining, too. I wonder how anybody could sell such a nice book to a second-hand man." She was turning the pages as she spoke. "Oh, look, Viola; somebody else has been using it lately!"

Sure enough, in one of the right-hand sections there was a girl's name written, and, though we didn't know any one of that name, we were interested to see that the ink was still bright blue, showing that the name had been written recently. With considerable curiosity we turned over a number of pages and found many other names, some of

boys and some of girls, all written in a nice clear hand, with the square corners on the loops, which many girls admire.

"I'll tell you what I think," said I. "I think this book used to belong to a girl who wrote in it all her friends' names opposite their birthdays. Jocelyn, look and see if she didn't write her own name in the front."

Jocelyn whisked open the front cover, and, lo and behold! there was a name, and in the same handwriting: "Hope Seaborne."

"How's that for initiative!" I cried proudly.

"Oh, you're a wonder! Well, if 'Hope' doesn't want this nice book, I certainly do," declared Jocelyn. "I just love it. Oh, Viola, I've just thought of something this second! I can use it for the stunt we each have to do at Wilbur Edson's birthday party Monday night!"

"That would be just splendid!" I agreed. "Nobody will do anything like it."

So Jocelyn paid for the horseshoe-book, and I paid for a lovely blue-and-gold book

of poems that cost only fifteen cents, and we started home, as it was then four o'clock.

"Have you done your algebra for Monday?" I asked after a while.

"No!" answered Jocelyn with such sudden gloom that I looked at her in amazement. Algebra has no terrors for her. She tosses *x*'s and *y*'s and *z*'s around the way a Japanese juggler tosses balls, and yet her mouth was away down at the corners. Knowing Jocelyn, though, I sensed directly what was the matter.

"Jocelyn Gay, you haven't made your costume for Monday night yet!"

"I do hate to sew," she said crossly but feebly.

"But when are you going to make it?" I demanded severely. "It's after four o'clock Saturday afternoon, and you have your algebra to do, and you have to go to bed early to-night because to-morrow you're going 'way out in the country to see your grandmother and you have to get up early. And Monday afternoon after school you

have your dancing lesson, and the party's at eight o'clock that night!"

"Yes, Viola, that's all true. You're very accurate, always," said Jocelyn meekly. "And if you weren't so polite you would have also said I need extra time to make it because I am fat and therefore hard to fit. True, true, all true! But I just can't bear even to think about all that fussy work."

"If you would develop a little poise," I remarked cruelly, "you would be victorious over adverse circumstances!"

She laughed so hard at herself, and in such a sporting way, that I thought I should never get her up over Daskam Ridge and back home. I really had to relent. "I'll come home with you and sew on your dress while you do the algebra," I offered.

So she invited me to supper, and the minute we got to the big brown house she started algebra and I started on her pink crêpe-paper dress, which wasn't even cut, and found my task most absorbing.

You have to expect that everything connected with parties given by the Edson family will be unusual. Mrs. Edson was having this one for Wilbur, who was seventeen that November second. He is very hospitable by nature, like his mother and his younger sister Helen, who is in the first year, and his two brothers, who graduated last year and are now in business, and also his father—indeed, that family keeps open house from morning till night. So when the invitations said: "Paper costumes. No presents, but please bring a stunt!" all those invited gladly exerted themselves to contribute to the occasion.

As the second of November was the Monday before Election Day, Jocelyn and I, after deciding that we should like to go as flowers to the costume party, thought it would be very suitable if we could go as patriotic flowers. She said she would like to represent the Daskam rose, after which our beautiful Rose-Tree Park is named. The big rose-tree there, which has lovely bright-crim-

son flowers every summer, is a descendant of a rose-slip brought over from England by one of the first women settlers of Daskam, and we have a Daskam rose on the city coat-of-arms. Therefore this was a most appropriate flower to be represented by a citizen of our city, and I thought a rose costume would be lovely with Jocelyn's long dark hair and rosy cheeks. She also liked my decision to go as the violet, which is our State flower, and which is also what my own name, Viola, means.

The work on the costumes was rather fussy, as Jocelyn had indeed truly pointed out, but it was not hard to cut out the bright pink and green crêpe-paper by the fancy-dress patterns we had bought, and half an hour after we had come in and Jocelyn came bounding upstairs into her room, where I was sitting on the floor cutting out great pink petals for her skirt, her dress was well under way. Of course it was made over one of her slips, and I had already basted the bodice in place.

"Try it on!" I directed, waving my scissors commandingly, for it is not often that I can order Jocelyn around, and I rather enjoyed doing so. "Then I'll pin the petals on the skirt."

Jocelyn put it on and admired her appearance greatly. I crept up and knelt before her and started pinning on petals.

"Your costume and mine will be the best-looking ones at the party!" she said with conviction, twisting herself half around to look at her back.

"Not if you don't keep still," said I. "Anyway, I shouldn't be too sure. Think who's coming! Not only our younger neighborhood crowd; all our leading set will be there—Doris and Archer and the whole lot of them. Wilbur knows everybody, you know."

"I wonder why he never goes around much with that crowd?" queried Jocelyn thoughtfully, squirming in the other direction to look at her sleeve.

"Keep still, Jocelyn! I don't believe he

cares anything about them, though they do like him. Being editor-in-chief of the *Green-and-White* suits Wilbur better than anything else. You know he isn't violently active."

Jocelyn laughed. "No, he'd have to lose some of his hundred and sixty pounds first. But he's very pleasant to them."

"He's pleasant to everybody—he's naturally that way, and I know he thinks it is a journalist's duty to be. He told me so once."

"Why is it a journalist's duty?" She gave a lurch forward.

"Jocelyn, do keep your arms still! Why are you reaching for that fortune-book now?" I demanded distractedly.

"I want to read it. I asked you why it is a journalist's duty to be pleasant."

"So he can represent everybody's point of view and boost the power of the press, Wilbur says," I answered. "He's very much in earnest about the *Green-and-White,* you know."

"He's made a great success out of the September and October issues. It's a much better paper than it was last year," said Jocelyn, "even if Wilbur is only a third-year student and they always had a senior for editor-in-chief before. He's clever, and I don't wonder Doris and her crowd want him in it, but of course they can't bear Rand Potter."

"And Wilbur sticks firmly to Rand on all occasions. Well, you know, Rand laughs at all that set and makes jokes about them the whole time."

"About whom does Rand not make jokes?" demanded Jocelyn most elegantly. "He never makes jokes that hurt people's feelings, anyhow. Ouch! Viola, that's *me!*"

I removed the pin from her, and remarked patiently:

"I'm sorry, Jocelyn. But you really did give a jerk just then when you snapped open that horseshoe-cover of the book. What are you looking at?"

"I just wanted to look again at this girl's name on the front page and see if we could have missed anything there, an address, for instance. I think it's amazing that any girl would sell this book when she'd really just got it, as she must have—the ink is so fresh. No, there's nothing here except 'Hope Seaborne.' I never heard of any one in Daskam named that, did you, Vi?"

"No. It's a pretty name, isn't it? Do you know, I've been wondering what 'Hope' is like!"

Jocelyn giggled. "So have I! I wish we could meet her, don't you?" She flipped the pages over. "Oh, Vi, let's look up everybody's birthday we know, and see if the fortunes fit!"

"Jocelyn Gay," said I firmly, rising with dignity all in one piece from the floor, "you take that dress off now, and sew on every piece of paper exactly as it is pinned. I will make the wreath for your hair, and we will both *work*. I am going to get you equipped so you can go to that party and

read the horseshoe-book there. That's the time and the place for looking up people's birthdays."

Jocelyn flung the book across the room into the middle of the bed, and almost crushed my ribs in a hug. "Yes, ma'am!" she cried. "Let's go!"

CHAPTER IV

WILBUR'S PARTY

When we got to the Edsons' Monday evening we found a large and varied company in great spirits, and arrayed in the most wonderful paper costumes.

The timely patriotic-costume idea had occurred to other people besides ourselves, though happily there were no other roses or violets. Doris Hart looked charming in a red-white-and-blue dress with a fan-shaped head-dress of gold, cut in points, that showed at once she was the Statue of Liberty. Archer represented the Daskam High School banner. He had on a smock of stunning green-and-white paper lozenges and a green-and-white tam-o'-shanter. Rand was enclosed in white pasteboard and padlocked, and ornamented with a little American flag. Of course he represented a ballot-box, and he had invented and made

his costume all himself, though most of the boys had had to call in their mothers or sisters to help them. Wilbur was a Chinese mandarin, very magnificent, with a long black paper pigtail. We also met Spanish boys and Irish girls and Dutch and Russian ladies and gentlemen, and many Mother Goose characters, but we didn't have much time to admire each other, for our host set us to playing progressive games at once.

Everybody knows that progressive games make the most absorbing possible kind of party, and certainly those games were varied as well as progressive, for whether you were gifted at carrying peanuts on the back of your hand or at writing limericks, you had a chance to display your talents. But the person whose tag was punched most frequently for winning was a queer little girl I had never met at the Edsons' before, though I had seen her a few times at school that year. She was in the first year, and Helen Edson seemed to be making quite a fuss about her. She was squarely built and

very erect and sharp-eyed, with a pale face and black hair cut in a straight-around bob. She wasn't a bit pretty, and she had on the queerest costume. It was entirely made of newspapers! She had a deep square cap that came down on her forehead and fell behind to her neck and stuck out in points on each side, very Egyptian-looking, and the skirt of her dress sloped out in four sharp points to the ground. It was all very odd, but it certainly suited her, both because it was odd and because of the black-and-white coloring. She wouldn't tell us what she represented, but said we must guess, and I had finally guessed, and correctly. She was the Sphinx! She said of course she had to have a skirt, so she used a pyramid. I hadn't caught her name when we were introduced, but certainly I noticed her.

Well, when we had gone the rounds of all the tables, and the boys were resting their nerves after the severe strain of trying to thread six needles in five minutes, Wilbur made an announcement:

"Ladies and gentlemen! We shall shortly descend to the gymnasium to witness a pillow-tournament by the boys. But first we must select a queen to crown the champion of the tournament, by means of an elimination egg race among the girls."

"Come along, girls; get set!" cried Rand, clattering in with all the Edson spoons in a basket, following Helen Edson, who had just entered the room with a soup-plate full of hard-boiled eggs. "Each put a spoon in your mouth—the handle, the handle, not the bowl! Doris, the end of the handle, if you please—not the middle! All ready, Helen!"

Helen began to walk down our line.

"If you want to know how much an egg weighs," she announced, "now's the time to find out."

She put an egg in each spoon, and each of us had to hold it steady there just by clutching the end of the handle between our teeth! It was hands off, absolutely. Then Wilbur announced that the one who reached the other end of the long drawing-room first

—with the egg, to be sure!—would be winner, and he blew a whistle, and we were off.

But "elimination" was the right name for that race. About half of us were eliminated during the first six steps. The hard thing to do was to keep sober, and if you laughed you were gone. And we all looked so perfectly ridiculous that very few of us could keep sober, especially as the boys were howling with mirth, and no wonder. I was one of the first to fall by the wayside, and I had to chase my egg clear under the piano. Jocelyn started well, but she was in too much of a hurry and her egg crashed down and skidded most picturesquely all over the waxed floor. Very soon it was evident that there could be but two possible queens, Doris and the little Sphinx girl, and though the latter never cracked a smile and strode forward steadily, Doris was a good deal taller and so outstrode her. Anyway, Doris was just determined to be queen. She knew she could do it well, of course. She set her

teeth firmly, she walked determinedly and quickly, she refused to listen to jeers or cheers, and finally she reached the wall about a foot and a half ahead of the Sphinx girl. We all clapped enthusiastically, for certainly Doris was very popular.

"Good for you!" said the little Sphinx girl, turning to her. "You did first-rate!"

This was a rather condescending and inelegant remark from a new first-year student to a senior, but it was said with great heartiness by a defeated competitor. Doris "didn't hear" it. She turned up her nose and turned her back on the speaker, facing the rest of the room with her most charming smile, as Wilbur came forward and presented her with her sceptre, which was the clothes-stick wound with rainbow-colored paper. Then we all hurried down to the "gymnasium," a big room in the basement fitted up by Wilbur's two brothers, who, unlike himself, are fond of exercise.

We girls sat down on one side, with our queen in the middle, opposite one parallel

bar, which was surrounded by thick mattresses. The boys took off their paper smocks and coats and rolled up their sleeves and got very serious. They drew for opponents, and Wilbur produced the weapons, two small feather pillows in the bottom of large stout pillow-cases, and announced the rules:

"Sit on the bar. Hold on with legs only. Both hands may be used to hold the pillow-case. The object is to knock the other fellow off with the pillow. No hitting above the neck. Go!"

If you want to see something wildly funny with any amount of action that doesn't hurt anybody, watch a pillow-tournament. It takes a lot of skill to keep your seat on a bar while you are being pounded, and are pounding, with a nice soft pillow. At first the fighters fell thick and fast; then the second round went more slowly, and also those which followed, as the "science" of the "fighters" developed. But finally everybody had fallen except Archer, who was

large and muscular and kept his balance well, and Rand, who, though slim, was very skillful and adroit.

They got up on the bar with determination gleaming from their eyes. Archer looked exceedingly earnest, Rand earnest and merry. Archer promptly let drive on Rand's ribs with a thump that bent Rand almost to right angles with the bar, but he clenched it with his knees and pulled himself up straight again and brought his pillow right down on top of Archer's arm and so cut off a new thump. Then they both hauled off and manœuvred a second, and the next instant Archer unexpectedly came down with his pillow on top of Rand's left shoulder, and Rand gracefully descended in sections to the floor!

"Hooray!" cried Rand. "The best man's won again! They always do!"

Doris and several of her friends began to clap, but some of the others interrupted: "Say! 'No hitting above the neck,' you know!"

"Why, he hit him on the shoulder. That's below the neck, I understand," said Doris loftily, and all her friends snickered.

"But he touched his neck!" cried Jocelyn, quite truthfully, but I gave her a pinch to hint that the boys had better settle it themselves. They were all standing around the bar now and arguing, and hadn't heard her after all, but Doris had, and she glared.

"Hitting on the neck isn't above the neck, certainly!" she retorted, almost snapping Jocelyn's head off.

The little Sphinx girl was observing Doris calmly. She did not seem to me the sort that is easily overawed.

"You should always offer to play over a disputed point," she observed to the world at large, and nobody contradicted her.

Indeed, it now seemed that it had finally occurred to Archer to do that very thing, and some of the boys wanted it done. But Rand said he was satisfied that however things had turned out in the excitement of the conflict, he was sure Archer hadn't aimed

at his neck, and he would be pleased to shake hands with the champion. So Wilbur, looking rather provoked in spite of his customary bland manner, declared Archer winner, much to the latter's satisfaction, and Doris crowned him with a lovely wreath of carrot-tops, after which we all went to supper, which we were quite ready for.

But no one had had time to eat more than three sandwiches when Wilbur announced that now the stunts would begin, and would go on while we ate, and he called on me first!

As I love to sing, I had prepared an original song about how we liked to cut a caper in our costumes made of paper on the birthday of our hospitable neighbor, and though, as you see, the rhymes were not perfect, the performance was most kindly applauded, and Rand said he couldn't have sung it better himself, which I fear was true, as he can't even whistle a tune! Then we had recitations and charades and selections on banjos and mandolins, and, by a happy

chance, Jocelyn was then called on, last of all. She aroused great interest when she exhibited the horseshoe-book, and explained it.

"Now I'll read everybody's fortune, beginning with our host's," she announced. But just as she opened the book at "November 2," amid a deep silence full of expectation, we all heard, very far off in the distance, eleven faint, clear chimes.

"The last time until we're in the new school!" murmured Wilbur.

"What!" cried Doris. "Are they going to take the chimes out of our old belfry so soon, when we don't move until New Year's?"

"Yes, the machinery needs repairing," said Wilbur; "and then the bells have to be put up in the new building. The clockworks will be allowed to run down at eleven to-night."

This was news to the rest of us, but of course Wilbur, being editor of the school paper, gets the news before most other peo-

ple, and we were much interested to hear it. For just a second it made us all feel bad, though of course we realized that our lovely sixteen-bell chimes would sound sweeter than ever from the tall new belfry. But we would miss them terribly all the time they were silent, those chimes of Daskam that not only rang the hours in such silver notes for us every day, but sang so many of our favorite tunes every holiday. The chimes were part of our life—we couldn't think what it would be like without their harmony. Then Jocelyn began:

"Here's Wilbur's fortune:

"You will have a unique position of influence. Calm judgment and stanch loyalty will make you a person of weight in your community."

We all shouted, for Wilbur was already such a person of weight in more senses than one! Then everybody naturally was crazy to hear his or her own fortune, so we all told our birthdays, and Jocelyn found the

corresponding fortunes. Doris liked hers ever so much:

"If you properly cultivate your social graces, they will make life beautiful and inspiring for yourself and all who know you!"

At Rand's we had to laugh harder than we had at Wilbur's:

"All the friendly mirth you can develop will serve you well, since on steep grades along life's highway, as on other highways, the best brake is one which eases the friction from time to time, or 'chatters'!"

And Archer's sounded most impressive:

"Your ambition to rule is quite within the law. When you, too, are within the law, that ambition can be triumphantly fulfilled."

Indeed, Jocelyn's stunt made the hit of the evening. She tried to explain how she had come across the book in the second-hand shop in Kendall Street, but nobody listened to her much. Everybody was so enchanted with having a fortune that seemed so special

and personal that it would have simply been cruelty to children to suggest that if you looked at any of those fortunes very hard it might almost seem as if they had been written so that they could, if necessary, fit almost anybody—that is, they gave advice that would help anybody, at least. However, if you had been mean enough to suggest that, nobody would have paid the slightest attention to you. Everybody went home from Wilbur's party in the most blissful state of mind, therefore, certain that the most wonderful good luck was awaiting him just round the corner!

Well, I fear that it was not all just round the corner, by any means. But the curious thing was that, as things turned out, I was almost converted myself into believing that our birthday fortunes might have been specially written! And the first hint of such a thing got abroad the very next Friday afternoon.

CHAPTER V

UP IN THE BELFRY

FRIDAY noon Jocelyn said to me:

"Let's get coats and go up on the roof and eat our lunch there."

The idea suited me exactly. It was a beautiful mild day, and we could enjoy it nowhere better than on the wire-enclosed roof which we use for an outdoor gymnasium in warm weather. I didn't feel much like society just then, anyway, so the two of us went up and sat down comfortably with our backs against the parapet, and enjoyed our sandwiches and the view simultaneously.

The latter was extensive, as Daskam High School is situated on the very summit of Daskam Ridge. All around us lay pretty red and gray roofs. To the east we could just catch the glitter of sunlight on the waves of the harbor, and to the west was

what we considered the most interesting view of all, not so much because it included the beautiful grounds of the Macklyn House, which is owned by Archer Macklyn's father, as because directly across the street was our new school. It certainly did look splendid, with its red bricks and white trimmings, and the sun blazing down on the shining gold bell-tower!

"What do you think of all this talk that's going around, Viola?" demanded Jocelyn when she had reached her cake.

"I haven't heard any special talk lately," I answered dismally.

"What's the matter with you, Vi?" cried Jocelyn vigorously, looking at me hard. "Well, for pity's sake! Are you still mourning over that B you got in history? Do you think I gave up playing handball this recess and brought you up here to talk some more about when the boundary-line of Louisiana was settled?"

"It doesn't seem likely," I admitted; "but I do think that after I had studied my

level best, and only forgot that one hateful date ——"

"Viola Bruce," said my kind friend impressively, "you smart people occasionally make a dumb individual like myself very tired."

"How so, please?"

"Of course it is most important to get as good marks as you can, but even more so to know how to use your brains, and that's what you don't know."

"Jocelyn, I do just love to have you scold me," said I, comfortably. "Do go on."

"All right," agreed Jocelyn, undaunted. "You miss the whole point of the situation, which is, that it is a wicked waste of time to lament what's over and done with, especially when you did do your level best. Just remember now forevermore that that date is 1819, and forget it, and bring your excellent and well-trained mind to bear on a pressing public problem which needs brains to solve it!"

"Hurray!" said I. "What a diplomat

you are! Now I suppose this pressing public problem is the subject of all the talk I haven't heard."

"Good! It is. Vi, do you remember Monday night at Wilbur's, when Archer won the pillow-tournament?"

"Oh, did he win it?" I inquired coldly.

Jocelyn snickered, and then grew sober.

"Well, anyway, a lot of people have been talking ever since about the way he won it. All the boys and girls except his own crowd say that all the other contestants steered absolutely clear of even touching each other's necks with the pillows. They say anybody with any respect for rules or sportsmanship wouldn't do what was doubtful."

"Do you think Archer knows what they're saying?"

"Oh, of course he must. But I don't think he cares much about what the other people think as long as he can have his own way. I used to like him, but he makes me terribly tired, the way he wants to run everything."

"I suppose he knows he's really very clever," said I.

"Oh, he is," agreed Jocelyn, "and nobody knows it better than I do." She was in the advanced art section, and that was one of the places where Archer particularly shone. He had designed the whole color-scheme of the street fair, and deserved all the praise he got for it. "I think he would be all right if he didn't go with that crowd," she continued.

"You mean Doris?" said I.

"I do, very largely," declared Jocelyn unabashed. "I know you like her, Viola, but I don't think you see at all how she's headed. Now, listen! I'm going to tell you the pressing public problem. You remember that owing to the fact that we had to pay for the smudged painting we have only one hundred and fifty dollars left for our gift to the new building?"

"Pretty stingy-looking for a school of this size!" I sighed.

"Exactly. So our leading set is now be-

ginning to propose that we give up having any gift. The problem is, shall we?"

"Impossible!" I cried, thunderstruck. "Why, even if everybody else in the school didn't want it, it wouldn't be legal not to have it. We passed a motion last spring that a gift must be presented."

"Archer and Doris and the rest of that crowd don't care how many motions we passed. Don't gape so, Viola! You see, Doris is deciding how she wants that money spent. She's really the leader in that set—Archer and all the rest of them follow her. Yes, I know they're all better off than she is, but she's the one who has by far the most personal influence, she's so bright and attractive, and what she says is likely to be done."

"Well, what does she want to do with the money?"

"She wants to give a great big fancy sort of house-warming with it when we move into the new building, instead of buying a present. You'll hear all about it if you

keep your ears open. It's being aired already to see how it will be received."

"What do people think of it?" I demanded, wishing I didn't have to ask so many questions on account of being so ignorant.

"At first everybody said it would be illegal, but now not so many are saying it."

I guess my mouth fell wide open. "Do you mean," I breathed, "that they are coming around to say that they'll disregard a motion they passed themselves in a public meeting, and then take money that was given specially for a gift, the money they made with the fair, and spend it on themselves?"

"That's what's happening," said Jocelyn.

"But, really, it ought to be stopped. I'm sure no one would want to do it who thought twice about it and saw what a wrong and ridiculous thing it would be to do."

"Viola," said Jocelyn earnestly, "of course you see right through the falseness of the idea, not only because you want to do

the right thing, but because you have a good clear head, which many, many people who want to do the right thing have not, and so I think you ought to take more interest in school matters and help us out of—of—of a chasm which is yawning before us like the sword of Damocles!"

She was so earnest that it did not even occur to me to smile at her considerably mixed metaphor. It sobered me, and I felt terribly ashamed. I knew I had been selfish in paying no attention to school matters so long as I was happy myself. I gazed humbly at the roof, and inquired:

"What do you want me to do?"

"You're on the gift committee, you know ——"

"So are you ——"

"And as this matter will surely come up before long, why don't you make a point of talking to people more than you do, and—what do they call it?—probing public opinion?"

"'Sounding,'" said I.

"Sounding public opinion, and seeing if people don't really want the gift. And try to think of something awfully good that everybody would like and unite on getting, something that wouldn't be too expensive for our means now, and that would get everybody excited so they would scrap this house-warming scheme."

"But why do you urge me to do this?" I asked, puzzled.

"Because something must be done, or this school will disgrace itself," declared Jocelyn. "Dear me, Viola, I'm not the only person who thinks so! Ever so many of the girls and boys do, but they don't know what to do about it. They would be glad to have somebody think of an idea that's better than anything the Hart-Macklyn set can get up, but at present they're the only leaders we have, and they can put through what they like."

"I'm no leader, though."

"No, you are not, but you have many bright and excellent ideas, and you have

them often. And they are the most important things in the world, because they tell us what to do, don't you see? Won't you exert yourself, then, and help those of us who care about the school reputation to save it if we can?"

I was touched. I admired Jocelyn tremendously, and it occurred to me then for the first time that she was a girl who was capable of being a real leader. She understood other people far better than I did, she liked them, she liked to work with them, she wanted to stand for everything that was good, without being self-conscious about it at all.

"Jocelyn, I'll do my best. I'll try not to disappoint you. I'll come out of my shell, at any rate," I promised.

"Then I'll help you by going back into mine and not saying straight out every single thing I think!" cried Jocelyn.

I burst out laughing. "It's a bargain! Only please don't go too far back! I'll start this minute!" I declared, jumping up

and peering over the parapet. "I'll go down and talk to some people. Every one has finished lunch now and is down in the playing-field. Come on, Jocelyn, the *Green-and-White's* out. There's Rand selling copies."

But Jocelyn was peeping around some skylights curiously. "Wait a second, there's something interesting here," she said. "Whatever are those men doing in the belfry? I'm going to see."

True to her adventurous disposition, over the roof she ran, dragging me with her, until we came alongside the belfry, which was set at the rear of this old building on the west side, directly above the playing-field. In it, as we approached, we could see our famous peal of bells, sixteen in all, hanging in three long lines, arranged according to size. Few schools have better chimes, and we have had ours only a few years. They are the splendid war-memorial of the city of Daskam, and were placed on the school because its position on top of Daskam Ridge

"WHATEVER ARE THOSE MEN DOING IN THE BELFRY?"
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allows the chimes to be heard clearly in every part of the town, and even, sailors tell us, far out at sea on days when the wind is in the right direction. Of course they had been silent now since Monday night. Two workmen in overalls had climbed the low wall into the belfry, and were getting tools out of their kits. When they heard our footsteps coming over the roof they looked up.

"Well, young ladies, we're going to take down your chimes," said one, a nice-looking elderly man with twinkling wrinkles around his eyes.

"You'll forget to come to school without them to remind you," said the other, who was young, and very big and merry-looking. "You won't mind that, though, will you?"

"We'll miss them dreadfully!" we both laughed, and Jocelyn asked, "What are you going to do with them?"

"The ringing-machinery is going to be cleaned," answered the old man, "and then they all have to be rehung in the new bell-

tower across the street. That takes time. It takes a great deal of skill, too, to hang a bell properly. Most people think a bell's just a piece of metal, but it's really a musical instrument, and must be properly placed to get the true tone out of it."

"I never knew that," said Jocelyn, looking at the bells with even greater interest. "Oh, look, Viola, the biggest bell has an inscription. I'm going to get inside the tower and read it!"

"Come along," said the young workman good-naturedly, and he helped her and then me over the low wall, and we went up to the biggest bell in the frame and found inscribed on it the date the chimes were presented by the city "in recognition of the valor and devotion of the sons and daughters of Daskam"; and below the inscription, in great, beautifully engraved letters, the word: "Loyalty."

"'Loyalty' is the name of the bell," said the young workman.

"Do bells have names?" Jocelyn asked.

"Many do. It's a very old custom to name them."

"Makes 'em human, sort of—and they are kind of human, if you know 'em," said the old workman smiling. "Didn't you ever hear of Big Ben, the bell in London, in the Westminster Clock Tower?" Of course we both remembered we had, and what a character Big Ben is in London life. "This is a nice set of bells," he went on, as if he liked to chat. "They'll sound better still in the new belfry yonder, because that roof is higher and the tower is better protected from the weather. This one's really too exposed. When we have a big wind-storm like the one we had last week, there's bound to be lots of dust and rubbish blown up here, and of course that doesn't do the clockwork any good."

"There's a bit of rubbish stuck right in the frame," said I, noticing something sticking between the top of one of the bells and the dusty, battered wooden frame that held them. I reached up and tugged at it, and

found it was a stiff pointed bit of scarlet cardboard. It came away suddenly, and my hand rebounded hard and accidentally struck and tilted the little bell just a trifle so that the clapper touched the rim. A most beautiful chime floated out into the sunny air, faint but clear.

"Oh, what a lovely note!" cried Jocelyn.

"Note!" said I. "Jocelyn, that's a chord. Listen, you can still hear it."

"The little young lady's right," said the old workman. "When you strike any good bell, it gives out at least five notes. Now I wonder," he said to me, "if you're a musician? Do you know what those notes were?"

I laughed, for he talked just like one of the teachers. "I'm enough of a musician to answer that," I said, as the chord finally died away. "The loudest note—the one you noticed principally, Jocelyn—was E flat of the middle octave. But I also heard the E flat above it and the E flat below it, and then, faintly, G natural and B flat above

the middle E flat. It's a perfect musical chord."

Involuntarily I burst forth into song, and sang the chord, and though every one, including myself, laughed at my low note, the young workman exclaimed:

"I'll say the young lady has a very correct ear! Not many people see at once that the notes of a good bell have been tuned into harmony with each other."

"Have they?" cried Jocelyn, quite amazed. "How interesting! How do they tune bells?"

"Why, you can see for yourself that a bell would have to be in tune with itself first before it could be in tune with others," answered the young workman. "If the chord it struck was discordant, think what the result would be if one discord after another was struck! How do they tune bells? They do it at the foundry where they cast them. The notes of the chord, you see, are rung through the different parts of the bell. That gives the different notes, for as the bell

narrows or broadens, different sound-zones are formed. The tuner gets the standard sounds from a series of tuning-forks, and the right notes are obtained from the bell by taking metal from the inside until the zones give the right notes and the chord is thus in true harmony. Listen!"

To our delight, he lightly struck each bell in turn with a tool he was holding, beginning with the biggest bell and ending with the smallest. The result was a beautiful sort of scale of chords! They were all in tune with themselves and with each other as well. We were quite fascinated until the last sound vanished.

"The smallest bell has the highest tone," said I at last.

"You are right! The larger the diameter of the bell, the deeper its tone," said the old workman.

"And once a bell's in tune," added the young one, "it stays pretty much in tune, unless it goes and gets cracked."

"Didn't I tell you bells were a lot like

folks?" demanded the old one, with a twinkle.

Our laughter rang out on the air, and Jocelyn and I peered down over the wall of the belfry to see if the girls and boys down in the playing-field below had heard us, and weren't wishing they were up in the belfry with us. But, to our utter and natural amazement, nobody appeared to have heard us laugh, or seen the workmen, or noticed the chimes! Nobody was playing games, or throwing balls, or running! That playing-field was the most solemn place I ever saw.

It is true that there were knots of people all over it, but nobody seemed to be saying a word, for everybody had his or her eyes glued fast to an open copy of the *Green-and-White,* which comes out the first Friday of every month.

Jocelyn looked at me. I looked at her. It was certainly time now to go down to the playing-field. She sprang over the belfry-wall and I followed her, still clutching, as

I later discovered, though I did not realize it at the time, the bit of scarlet cardboard I had pulled from the bell-frame. We thanked the workmen very heartily for letting us see the bells and for telling us such interesting things about them, and hurried down to the field.

CHAPTER VI

THE *GREEN-AND-WHITE* EDITORIAL

WHEN we got there, it was still absolutely quiet. We saw some girls in our class down at the end, and dashed toward them, wondering what in the world could have happened. On the way we passed Archer Macklyn, the most self-possessed boy in the world, looking absolutely distracted. Halfway across the field Jocelyn called out: "What's the matter, girls?" But everybody who said anything at all said: "Sh-h-h!" as if whatever had occurred were too awful to be even mentioned, while very few, indeed, appeared to have heard the question at all, so absorbed were they still in the school paper. So we were at a complete loss until we finally got up to the other girls and somebody thrust into our hands a copy of the *Green-and-White* which was open at the following arresting

EDITORIAL

As the first of a new month has passed with NO signs appearing of CONFESSION from the party or parties responsible for the SHOCKING and SCANDALOUS accident to the beautiful painting in our new building:

And as such unwarranted reticence on the part of the GUILTY offends the MORAL SENSE of a LARGE PORTION of our school community:

The Green-and-White hereby announces that this party or parties is or are

KNOWN,

as are the

DETAILS

of the mishap!

We trust that any one involved in this matter will now take steps promptly to recover their own lost reputation and the esteem of their fellow-men, because it is certainly NEVER too late to repent. And the rest of the school must remember that it is never right, either, not to forgive those who are sorry for their faults, even if it is a little hard to have to take money you had intended to buy a GIFT with to pay for other people's misdemeanors.

Wasn't that a stunner?

But you can't be shocked dumb forever, and by the time we had read the above amazing article, there was a buzz like bees in a clover-field rising all over the grounds. And to cut a long story short, I might say that that buzz speedily became a roar of excitement. For days only two things were talked about at school, both relating to the *Green-and-White* editorial: the first was, who had written it? Of course anybody on the staff might have, but Wilbur Edson came right out and said he had, and took full responsibility for it. Secondly, we debated who, who, *who* was known to have smudged the painting? But though somebody knew, according to the editorial, this point remained a mystery, for nobody found out.

However, Mr. Lane promptly sent for Wilbur, and they had a most interesting talk. Wilbur told Jocelyn and me about it one day when he met us out taking our daily walk together. We were qualifying for membership in the hiking club, for which you

have to present a record of walking ninety miles in thirty days, and though we had been stepping along pretty briskly up State Street, we slowed down to accommodate ourselves to Wilbur's stately tread as far as his house when we saw he had something to communicate.

He began by saying that he had seen Mr. Lane, and that he was all right. This was rather a relief to hear, because Mr. Lane is very particular, and some of us wondered if the editorial hadn't gone rather far in being so mysterious, though we hoped not, because we all liked both mystery and Wilbur.

"I explained to him that the whole idea of writing the editorial was my own," said Wilbur with great dignity. "'Public sentiment, sir,' I said, 'is, generally speaking, quite up in arms regarding that smudge on the painting. As I have a unique position of influence, being editor-in-chief of the paper, I felt I ought to use it in expressing public opinion and discovering the guilty.'"

"'A unique position of influence!'" gasped Jocelyn. "Wilbur, you never said that! Your birthday fortune!"

"I did, then! I had one terrible time getting the printer to put the editorial in, too. I only wrote it Tuesday, and when I took it to him the paper was already made up to come out Friday, and I had to pay him two dollars out of my own money to reset the paper and put it in. I told Mr. Lane so."

"And did you design the form—I mean the capitals and all that?" I asked.

"Yes," said Wilbur with modest pride; "that was so that everybody would be sure to read it."

"Well, they did," said Jocelyn. "And what did Mr. Lane say?"

"He said he thought I was sincere, and then he asked me, 'Do you know personally, at first-hand, the facts of that accident to the painting?' And I said, 'No, sir, but I know of an entirely trustworthy person who does.'"

"Oh!" breathed Jocelyn, as awe-struck as I was. "But of course he didn't ask you who that was?"

"No, indeed; he just said that his brother, who is a reporter on a newspaper, had told him that reliable papers never publish any news as facts until they can confirm it absolutely. So I said I had not known that, but I would not print what he had called a 'second-hand' story again. And then he said: 'I believe you really are anxious to use the power of the press to support sound public opinion, and I am glad to see that. And if I may make a suggestion, Edson, next time you write an editorial you might look up some models of compound sentences to copy!' So I said, 'Very well, sir, I will;' and that's what I'm going to do now, though I didn't see anything wrong with my grammar in that article."

Maybe there was, but I don't think anybody had noticed it except Mr. Lane, and I don't think the interest the editorial had aroused would have died down for ever so

long if it had not suddenly been eclipsed the very next day by the unexpected revival of the school-gift project. Doris, who was chairman of the gift committee, sent all the members notes to attend a meeting that recess without fail, and of course Jocelyn and I got ours. As we had had many talks about the gift project since the day we had been up in the belfry, and as I had actually thought of what I called a suggestion for a gift, and Jocelyn kindly called an idea, we were very glad there was going to be a meeting so we could see whether it would be received at all favorably.

We were almost the first to arrive in the classroom where the meeting was to be held, and as we judged it might be long, we brought our French books with us for our next class, so we could go directly there without delay.

But there was one girl ahead of us in the class-room, sitting at one end of the long table there, a little black-haired girl I knew by sight but didn't immediately place.

However, she didn't leave us long in the dark as to who she was.

"Hello, girls!" she said promptly. "My name's Abigail Sims, you know. I remember you at the Edsons' party. You're Viola Bruce—and you're Jocelyn Gay. Nice party, except for a couple of the people there, wasn't it?"

Then I remembered her, and I saw Jocelyn did, too. She was the little Sphinx girl whom Doris had snubbed so hard. As she proceeded to explain without any hesitation, for she was not shy, she had just been appointed on the gift committee as a representative of the first-year class. Her class had confidence in her, she said.

Well, perhaps they were justified, for while she was the very freshest child I ever saw in my whole life, there was something straightforward about her, and she did not look or act at all like a weak character. She told us she thought she should like Daskam High very much, and also Daskam, into which, from one of the suburbs, it ap-

peared that her family had just moved, on account of her father's being a doctor with an increasing city practice. I believe she also liked their house, which she said was a lovely new one, and she told us just exactly where it was situated, just a little beyond the school, where a row of bungalows had been finished late that summer.

Then maybe she thought it would be interesting for us if we talked a while about ourselves, too, for she looked at my French books, and asked me if I liked French, and how old I was, and where I had got my pretty green dress with the red-embroidered collar. Then she asked Jocelyn how old she was, and if she didn't just love to solve puzzles.

I could see that all this attention was meant to be flattering, for I couldn't believe that this amazing child would bother with us if she didn't like us, but I could see Jocelyn getting all ready to explode with impatience over little Miss Curiosity. Then suddenly—and awfully sweetly, too—she

seemed to remember her decision not to utter all her thoughts if it would help the difficult situation about the gift which we were just going to discuss in a few minutes. She smiled very kindly at Abigail, who certainly was rather cute in her own queer way, and said diplomatically, for she hates puzzles, really:

"They're very interesting, but I'm not a bit good at them."

"Aren't you? I am," announced Abigail. "I love them. I have a whole shelf of books I got for prizes from girls' papers for guessing them. I make them up, too. I make cross-word puzzles and rebuses and riddles and hidden animals and islands and all sorts of things. I always get at least honorable mention for the puzzles I make."

"If you like riddles, I guess that was what made you think of coming to the party as the Sphinx," I suggested.

"Yes," said Abigail. "You've got the idea."

But that was all from her just then, for

Rand Potter came prancing in with the latest joke, which was about how a boy in his Latin class had translated a sentence to read that the general had summoned artesians to build a wall, meaning, of course, *artisans!* And in a minute Archer Macklyn, who was on the committee ex-officio, came in with two of his third-year friends, —John Parker, who was, at least I thought so then, a very dull, heavy kind of boy, and Larry Hill, who was the lively, good-natured sort. Then Doris arrived at once with another senior girl, Frances Walton, about whom the main thing was that she always tried to be exactly like Doris. And you wouldn't have wondered if you had seen Doris as she came in, perfectly charming, in her bright orange Angora sweater she had got that fall, and an orange ribbon around her thick dark hair. I couldn't take my eyes off her.

CHAPTER VII

JANGLINGS

HER big brown eyes sparkled as she cried briskly: "All here? Splendid!" Then, catching sight of Abigail, whom she had passed on her way to the head of the table, "Why, here's our new first-year member!" she added with her sweetest smile. "It seemed as if they'd never appoint you! Don't you want to come and sit up here beside me?" She pointed to a vacant seat next her.

"No," said Abigail, with a haughty and prolonged sniff.

Rand snickered right out, and Jocelyn nearly did, though all of us were scandalized. I was a little mystified also, for while Doris had not been very polite to Abigail at the Edsons', it didn't seem to me that Abigail was a small-minded person who would take a public revenge for an affront. I said as quickly as I could:

"Doris, have you received many suggestions as to what people would like our gift to be?"

This was rather an abrupt plunge into business, but Doris looked at me gratefully, for Abigail's unexpected reply had left her breathless and stunned and red as a beet.

"Not one," she answered with a gasp, "so I think the school will be glad to accept any recommendation the committee agrees to make. We ought to decide to-day, too, because we move into the new building in about six weeks, and we want to have our gift ready to present then, don't we?"

"Have we still only a hundred and fifty dollars?" asked Frances Walton.

"Yes," nodded Doris rather plaintively. "Not much for two hundred and fifty people from this school to give, is it?"

"We couldn't possibly buy anything for that sum good enough to please the student body," declared Archer. "It would be better to do nothing than look stingy, I think."

"Oh, we can't do nothing!" cried Doris whimsically.

Abigail again sniffed disdainfully and wouldn't laugh at the unexpected double negative, though the rest of us did.

"In that case," said Rand, "there's just one course open to us."

"What is that, please?" inquired Doris, not very warmly.

"We must get some more money."

"Oh, nonsense, Potter," said Archer and John and Larry all together. "You know there's no time before the holidays to get up another entertainment. Nobody wants to, anyhow."

"I see you've made a survey of public opinion," remarked Rand, with a wide grin.

That time Abigail snickered, it was so evident that they had done nothing of the sort and were just deciding what they wanted done without consulting the school at all. They all scowled, and so did Frances; but Doris, while provoked, tried to smooth things over for the sake of the meeting.

"I don't think raising money by an entertainment now would be practical, really, Rand," she said. "In fact, Mr. Lane warned me it wouldn't be."

"He didn't mention an entertainment," suddenly announced Abigail, indicating Rand. "That isn't the only way to get money, anyhow."

"So," continued Doris, as if she hadn't heard her at all, "I have been wondering—as there haven't been any suggestions, you won't mind my making one?—whether we couldn't think of a better way to use this money than we originally had in mind."

"How would that be?" Archer asked her.

"Well, we all know," Doris began, looking as if she was trying to deal carefully and tactfully with a sore subject, "that the school spirit isn't as good as usual just at present. Owing to the delay in getting into the new building, and this unfortunate—er—accident to the mural painting, and the—er—results of the accident, we've had a dreadfully dull, depressing autumn, and

everybody is grumbling." She turned to Jocelyn. "Don't you find that is true?" she asked.

"Yes, it is," answered Jocelyn readily. "I was hoping this committee could think of something to do with the fund we have that would interest everybody and unite the school again."

"Exactly what I think, too!" said Doris enthusiastically. "Don't you think, therefore, it would be all right to take that fund and spend it for the benefit of the school in the way the school needs it most now? We intended to spend it for the benefit of the school all along, of course, and we would just be adapting ourselves to new circumstances. You know, for a hundred and fifty dollars we could have a perfectly magnificent house-warming party to celebrate our moving into the new building. We could have decorations and a band and refreshments and speeches, and maybe an entertainer, and invite everybody worth while in town, and cheer ourselves up and make lots of new

friends for the school, and please everybody! What do you all think of that?"

It certainly sounded fascinating the way she put it.

"It's a gorgeous idea, and just what we need!" cried Frances Walton.

"That's the stuff!" declared Archer. "I'm for it!" And Larry and John both expressed entire approval.

Doris looked much pleased at this support, and it did seem very nice for everybody to be agreeing on a plan and enthusiastic about putting it through, though in a vague sort of way you could realize you hadn't had much chance to think about the idea so far. She turned to Abigail next, and asked her very politely what she thought the first year would think of having a house-warming.

"Well," said that terrifying child slowly, "in history this morning we read about the Roman emperor who gave the people bread and circuses to keep them quiet ——"

She really had to be sat on this time, so Jocelyn interrupted:

"Listen, please, Doris! No doubt a great many people would enjoy having such a house-warming, but don't you think we might be criticised if we tried to get one up?"

"How?" demanded Doris.

"Why, that money was contributed by the patrons of the street fair we held last spring, and I am sure they understood distinctly that it was going for a school gift. In fact, that was the announced purpose of holding the fair—so we should be able to make a gift, I mean. In that case, ought we to take that money and give ourselves a a party with it?"

I saw Jocelyn felt that the idea of the party was somehow tricky and she didn't like it, but she certainly spoke very restrainedly and sensibly. In fact, I thought she did so determinedly. Doris said:

"I don't think the patrons of the fair gave money for any definite gift, did they? They just wanted to help us, and we still want to help the school. Changed circumstances

might change the manner of disposing of the fund, it seems to me."

"But, Doris," interposed Rand, "if we should invite the whole town to this house-warming, as you suggest, we'd have got money from them in the first place to pay for their own entertainment!"

"What do you think, Viola?" asked Doris rather peevishly. She wasn't fond of being opposed.

"I don't believe we'd be allowed to do it," said I, as mildly as I could, for the more I thought of the suggestion the less I thought of it, you might say. "It would make us look like babies to ask permission to do it and be refused, you know."

Well, Doris had her heart set on that house-warming, and she was determined to have it, just as she had been determined to be queen the other night at the Edsons'. Archer wanted it at least as much as she did, if not more, so the two of them urged the plan for all they were worth, and Frances and Larry and, for a while, John,

tried to make the rest of us like it; but, though not opposed in any way to parties, we couldn't exactly see that we had a right to one like that. They got rather hot, and so did we. Then, after both sides had repeated their arguments many times, and there was evidently nothing new to be said, Doris made up her mind, it seemed to me, to jam that recommendation through.

She asked to have a motion made formally that the committee submit the idea of this house-warming to the students to vote on. Archer made it, and Frances seconded it. And when we voted, we were all simply staggered,—that is, all except John, probably,—for it failed!

You see, there were eight votes on that committee, not counting the chairman's, of course. No doubt Doris thought there would be a tie between her four friends on one side, and Jocelyn, Abigail, Rand, and me on the other, so she, as chairman, would have to cast the deciding affirmative vote. It had certainly looked as if the motion was

going through. But, to the amazement of everybody, John, who hadn't spoken for the longest time,—though he talks very little anyhow and his silence aroused no suspicion,—swung around to the negative side and cast his vote with us. Evidently he thought his previous stand had been wrong and was willing to say so. He didn't seem to have been just that sort before, but probably he did more thinking than we had given him credit for. So I decided not to be astonished again if I found that standing up for what seemed right won support from unexpected sources. But O dear me, how provoked Doris and Archer were!

"It's all very well to be so noble," snapped Doris, not so sweet as usual, "but we have got to think of some way of using this fund that we can recommend to the student organization. They won't like it a bit if we don't."

"They don't like it much already because we haven't," said Rand. "I know I'm eccentric to go around talking to people,

but that's what I do, and that's what I hear."

" For pity's sake, do stop being so foolish! And not only Rand—*everybody!*" cried Doris, dreadfully vexed and looking rather queer, too, almost as if she was frightened. " Here I am, the only person who can think of one single thing that can be done with the rather small sum of money we have, and you turn my proposal down and yet won't suggest anything better! It's not fair. The members of this committee ought to do some work, not just criticise and tease and try to be smart!"

Well, there was some truth in what she said, though her remarks were a little hard on her friends who had backed her up so heartily, all except John, just at the end. Nobody had made another suggestion, and nobody did. Jocelyn and I looked at each other, and saw the time had come when we could present the idea that had occurred to us. So forthwith, trying to be as brave as I could, I " came out of my shell."

"Jocelyn and I have had an idea," I began.

"Viola has had an idea," corrected Jocelyn.

"Let's all have it!" ordered Doris.

CHAPTER VIII

EXPLOITS BY ABIGAIL

All the committee turned toward me most attentively, and I felt encouraged, because I had faith in the idea. So I began quickly:

"I think the committee feels we ought to give a present to the school after all. Now, as you know, we have a splendid set of chimes, but perhaps you've all noticed that though they play all sorts of tunes, they never play 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'"

"Sure enough, they never do!" ejaculated Rand. "I wonder why not?"

"Because none of the bells rings a note that is high enough," I explained. "They can't play the note for the word 'free' in the line 'O'er the land of the free.' I had a chance to discover this a few days ago."

Then I told the girls and boys how Jocelyn and I had talked to the workmen up in

the belfry the previous Friday, and how one of them had rung the bells for us, and how, as I was blessed with a good memory for music, I had gone home and played the notes on my piano and had a delightful time finding which of my favorite songs came within their range. I had told Jocelyn all this previously, of course, and she also knew what I said next, that in the course of doing this I had discovered that "The Star-Spangled Banner" had to be left out. When I found this out, I remembered that I had never heard it played, even in our splendid patriotic holiday concerts on our chimes.

"I thought," I concluded, "that maybe if the school knew all this, they would like to present a bell that would have the 'free' note dominant, so our national anthem could be played whenever we wanted it. I don't know how much bells cost, but, as I told you just now, it is the small bells which play the high notes. Now I wondered, if you liked the idea of giving a bell to complete

this set of chimes this way, whether we might not find out if the school would favor the idea, too, and at the same time make inquiries as to what such a bell would cost. Perhaps it would be within our means. What do you think?"

"That is something like an idea!" said Rand with enthusiasm.

This was more polite to me than it was to Doris, and she looked very much affronted and snapped her lips shut. Rand didn't see her, of course. Abigail said:

"That idea has some sense to it, and it's nice, too. The first year would like it, and we're the biggest class."

And John, by way of being even more tactful, observed slowly:

"Well, I thought that house-warming idea was kind of childish, when you came to think of it, but I don't see why a bell mightn't be very popular."

Doris looked so freezing that I was scared. Things were going the way they always do when advocates of some good cause, through

lack of tact, antagonize people that are against it. I didn't think we'd give any bell, whatever else we gave, by the way Doris and Frances and Larry scowled, for though there were enough members of the committee in favor of it to put a recommendation through, the ones against it were the people who had most influence in the student body. The latter could easily reject it.

"Well, if a bell would be popular," said Jocelyn quietly, "it might interest and unite the whole school, and that's what we're aiming at, isn't it?"

"Yes, exactly," said Archer, who hadn't spoken yet. He had been trying to catch Doris's eye, I had noticed. He wore a rather anxious expression, as if he was worried about something and had a plan about it he wanted to discuss, and as he spoke she looked up and saw him. "I think in that case it might be well to talk the idea up and see how it's received. Don't you, Doris?"

"Well, perhaps it would be a good thing to do," agreed Doris unexpectedly. "It would give the school something to think about, anyhow, and I don't say it's a bad idea."

So we decided to announce the plan and talk it over with everybody, and, if it was liked, to present it for a vote at a school meeting called for one day next week. Then the ten-minute warning-bell rang, and all the boys scooted,—to play ball for ten minutes, not to get ready for class,—while we five girls prepared to follow them out in our more stately manner. Frances Walton gave a loud yawn and drooped over the table.

"Gracious, what a perfect nuisance this gift is!" she said languidly. "But at least I got an idea for myself by coming to this meeting. Vote of thanks to you, Vi."

"Dear me, I'm just broadcasting ideas today," said I. "Here are two already. I must have lost count of them. I don't know what the second one is."

"It's for that bothersome Friday assembly," she returned. "Mr. Lane's making me take charge of the program, and I couldn't think of a single thing to do until you were talking, and then I had an inspiration."

I should explain that once a month we have Friday afternoon assembly, with special programs which the students run. Mr. Lane is very keen about them, not only because he thinks it is good for us to learn how to amuse ourselves, but because it gives him a good chance to invite people to the school and show it off. And we are very keen about them because we like getting them up and we always have a good time. Frances was just pretending it was bothersome.

"What was the inspiration, please, if I'm responsible for it?" I inquired.

"Mr. Lane said we'd had so many educational programs lately he'd like it if we had an entertaining one this time, so I'm going to get up a singing-school. All these

bells and music and so forth made me think of having one. It will be terribly funny, and no trouble."

"How do you get it up?" I asked, much interested.

"You'll see. I want you on the committee!"

"Oh, no-o-o!" I began, but Jocelyn wouldn't stand for that.

"Of course you'll be on it, Vi," she told me firmly, grinning at Frances. "You're a public character now! We expect you to live up to your reputation and uphold the community, you understand. And while I don't know what a singing-school is, I judge it may have something to do with singing, and there you might be useful. So, forward, march!"

"All right," I agreed meekly. "I'll help you, Frances. Thank you for asking me."

"I want to be on the committee, too," announced Abigail without any warning. "Can I?"

Frances was so staggered that she actually

didn't suggest: "*May* I?" A first-year student speaking in such a manner to a senior, and inviting herself to be on a committee—a pretty responsible and esteemed committee, too! Abigail was indeed a Sphinx girl.

"I love to work," declared our young friend sternly, obviously awaiting an answer.

"Oh—all right," said Frances feebly. "You may be on it."

"And when do we meet?" came back Abigail.

Frances got out of her chair and sidled up toward Doris.

"Very soon," she said. "I'll notify you. I must go to class now. So long!"

The two of them hurried out of the room, and Jocelyn and I followed, with Abigail firmly attached to us. We both thought she was terribly fresh, but it wasn't any of our business what she said to Frances, and there was something decidedly robust and vigorous about her that made you like her in spite of yourself and listen to whatever

she said. Moreover, she had offered to relieve me of one of my several heavy French books, and, I need hardly say, had taken it before I could either thank her or decline her offer.

"That will be nice, won't it, getting up the singing-school?" observed Abigail. "I can't sing a bit, but I can work like fury. I'm glad you're on the committee, Viola. I was going to ask Frances why she didn't put Jocelyn on, too, but she went away. Here, what's all this?"

She had spied a pointed book-mark sticking out of the book, and had the volume open in a twinkling. The book-mark was of scarlet cardboard,—indeed, it was the very bit of cardboard I had pulled from the bell-frame up in the belfry the previous week. When I found time to look at it I saw that it was designed for a marker. It was in the form of an elaborately-cut-out anchor standing on a capital C. There was a long straight flap attached to turn over at the top and hold the marker in place. As it was

pretty, and strangely not at all soiled, I had used it.

"Well, well, what have we here?" inquired Abigail, scrutinizing it with eagle eyes as we walked down the hall.

"It's a book-mark, dear child," said Jocelyn; but you couldn't tease Abigail. She kept her eyes glued to it and merely remarked:

"Not yours, is it, Viola?"

"It is in the sense that I found it," I answered meekly.

"Why should you think it wasn't hers?" asked Jocelyn with some curiosity.

"As long as you said you weren't good at puzzles, I'll tell you," said Abigail kindly. "This is a proper name rebus. I've seen lots of them. People mark their books and things with them, you know."

"And can you read it?" asked Jocelyn respectfully.

"Probably," returned Abigail with due caution, but not without self-confidence. "I'll try. Well, here's an anchor; that must

mean 'hope.' An anchor never means anything else that I ever heard of. And here's a capital C. Now that's likely s-e-a, 'sea.' It may not be, but there's a good chance, so let's try it. Hm-m-m. How's the anchor connected with the C?"

"It's on top of it," I suggested, as she paused in thought.

"The C carries it—it is carried by the C—it is borne by the C—borne by—the *sea!*" mused Abigail. "The anchor is borne by the sea—hope is borne by the sea—I've got it!"

"What is it?" cried Jocelyn and I, both mystified.

"Why, it's '*Hope Seaborne!*' That's a girl's name. It must be the name of the person this belongs to," said Abigail. "I never heard of her. Do you know her?"

"No," we gasped, stunned and delighted and more mystified than ever. That name again—"Hope Seaborne"—the owner of "Your Birthday Fortune"!

"That's right," announced Abigail

calmly. She had turned the marker inside out. On the very top of the anchor, which was so closely joined to the flap that I had never examined it, was written in the tiniest letters, but in the square-looped writing in the book: " Hope Seaborne."

CHAPTER IX

THE SINGING-SCHOOL

For the next twenty-four hours Jocelyn and I could not cease marvelling, not only at the cleverness of our accomplished young friend, Abigail Sims, in reading the book-mark rebus with such unheard-of ease, but also because we were now quite satisfied that there must be, somewhere in Daskam, a girl named Hope Seaborne.

Jocelyn had found "Your Birthday Fortune" down in Kendall Street, and it was Hope's; and I had found a book-mark up in the belfry, and it was Hope's. We exhausted our imaginations trying to guess how those two things had got into such curious places, and we racked our brains to devise some way whereby we could return her property—really, her treasures—to "Hope," as of course we always called her. But, as I pointed out to Jocelyn, the best

way, indeed, the only way, to solve those problems was to find Hope first; and, as Jocelyn pointed out to me, we didn't exactly know how to go about doing that. And, as we both agreed, it was much more exciting and interesting to keep her a secret until we could tell everybody all about her. So we kept our discovery of her existence to ourselves, resolving, however, to be on the lookout every minute for any clue that might lead to finding her.

And then directly we were occupied with getting up the singing-school, or, rather, I was, for Jocelyn was left out of it entirely, to my great wrath and also to her disappointment, I am sure, though she never said a word that would make you think so, and even pointed out to me with much truth and sense that if only twenty-four people were wanted in it, everybody in Daskam High School could not be included. But I always thought privately that the reason Jocelyn was left out of the entertainment was because the idea of giving a bell was received

so favorably when it was suggested to the school.

For it met with instant success! The fact that this new bell, small though it might be, would complete the set of chimes so that they could play "The Star-Spangled Banner," seemed to grip everybody's imagination. There was more enthusiasm and harmony over the idea than one would have thought possible in a community where two hundred and fifty people frequently seemed to have about as many different opinions on a given subject! Mr. Lane, too, liked the proposal immensely, and told us he would see about getting proper permission from the city to add it to the memorial chimes. He did caution us that bells were pretty expensive, but everybody said that the one we wanted to buy would be small, and when I tell you that somebody proposed that if we needed more than a hundred and fifty dollars we could be taxed up to thirty cents apiece, and that the proposal was declared on all sides to be excellent, perhaps you will

agree with me that enthusiasm could go no farther!

Our leading set did not, it was true, seem especially excited about the idea, and kept cautioning us that the bell would have to be ordered almost immediately if we wanted it by New Year's, for it seemed that bells must remain undisturbed quite a while after being cast, so the metal can cool off. They pointed out that decisions made too quickly are often regretted, and appeared somehow to be trying to delay action on the proposal, until everybody except themselves, it seemed to me, with one exception, began to make harsh remarks about tyranny and oppression, which all the leading set ignored. The exception was Rand Potter, and he made up the following riddle:

"What should be our leaders' favorite American historical object?
"*Ans.* The Liberty Bell!"

While not exactly brilliant, it seemed very timely and apropos and made every-

body laugh, and then suddenly all the opposition agreed that perhaps after all a bell was just the right thing. They couldn't stand a joke at all. So when the school held a meeting, it was tentatively decided to give a bell if practicable, and the secretary was instructed to write to the foundry that had cast the other bells and ask for prices and all necessary information, and everybody was pleased again.

And what had pleased people most about the origin of the idea of getting a bell was the way Jocelyn had come to find out about bells in general by climbing into the belfry and talking to the workmen. I got all the credit any one could want, in fact, much more than I deserved, for making the concrete suggestion, for I agreed with public opinion fully that if Jocelyn hadn't climbed into the belfry probably no one would ever have thought of giving a bell. Her jolly adventurous disposition got a real tribute, and people began to pay quite a lot of attention to her and to what she said, whereas before

they had just thought she was a lot of fun. But it was no wonder they did so, for while she was as lively as ever, she seemed somehow steadier and less impetuous, almost as if the idea of the bell had taught her some sort of secret.

Of course I couldn't have been the only person who noticed the change in her, or the attention she got. One day Frances said to me:

"Viola, dear, you know I did think of asking Jocelyn to help with the singing-school, but it seems to me now that maybe it would be a little mean to do so."

"Why?" I asked, surprised at first.

"Well, she's always so busy in the afternoons in the studio that maybe she couldn't come to meetings, and, anyway, she's on the gift committee. We mustn't duplicate that in the singing-school committee, really. Doris was cautioning me about that."

"I'm on the gift committee, too," said I.

"Ah, but you're musical, and I must have another musician to help me, and Jocelyn

isn't musical at all, you know. That's another reason for not asking her, really, though I wouldn't ever tell her so, of course."

I didn't say anything, but I felt disgusted, for Frances had originally wanted Jocelyn for stage-manager, and she wouldn't have had to sing a note. Abigail Sims, who proclaimed that she was about as musical as a crow, was on the committee. I saw Frances was just making a pretext not to have Jocelyn, because Jocelyn was a younger student who was getting popular and had different ideas from those of Frances and her friends.

Well, the omission turned out for the best, in the end, but that was to Jocelyn's credit, and nobody else's.

However, the singing-school went forward at a rapid pace, and that was largely to Frances's credit, for she was an able organizer, though I cannot think a very tactful one. She was so anxious to make the affair a success that she didn't seem to

understand that people have feelings even when they are working for a cause. She chose about twenty good singers from among the four classes and several other people to act comic characters, among them Wilbur and Rand, who were to be respectively the squire, patron of the old-fashioned singing-school, and his black man-servant, Washington Jefferson. Being respectively stout and stately, and slim and spry, and willing to go to no end of trouble about costumes and make-up, these boys promised to add much to the occasion, when suddenly Frances decided that Washington Jefferson *must* be able to play the fiddle. It was one day at recess, and a number of us were in the senior room talking.

"Why?" I asked, for Rand and Wilbur, who were there, were too astonished to speak.

"It would look so amusing, and improve the music."

"But Rand doesn't play, and we didn't expect it of him when we chose him ——"

"I've said before, lots of times," interrupted Frances quite sharply, "that we really have to make this up as we go along; that's the way singing-schools are got up, and it saves a great deal of trouble rehearsing—there's no fixed plot or dialogue. So we're likely to think of improvements from time to time—we have already, as you know, in changing some of the songs. The squire's black man-servant *must* play the fiddle, that's all. It's the right business for him."

She was like a steam-roller, and I felt crushed, being much younger and less experienced, though not so much so that I did not connect cause and effect. Rand's Liberty-Bell joke was then two days old and still going strong! I did think she was awfully arbitrary, though the idea of the fiddle was good, but what right had she to ask Rand and then hint she didn't want him because he didn't have a certain ability she never had thought of in the first place? She put him in a hard position, and Wilbur, too, for that matter, for Wilbur was madder on

Rand's account than Rand was on his own, yet he couldn't back out of the entertainment because he was mad, or tell a girl what he thought of her. He glared at her, though, and Rand rushed to the rescue.

"All right, Frances, get somebody that can play a fiddle, if you want to. I'll do another part."

Now it was she who glared! Of course she had been trying to put him out of the show, and he didn't see it. Rand is rather dense sometimes. I have never known whether he does it on purpose or not. Anyway, he went right on:

"Say, I tell you what! I'll be an Indian boy! All dressed up in costume! Whoop-ee-ee! Heap fine stunt!"

"An *Indian* boy in a *singing-school!*" ejaculated Frances with a disdainful laugh. "I never heard of such a thing!"

"No," said Abigail.

Frances jumped. She had forgotten Abigail was there. But there she was, making copies of the songs. Frances looked

very suspiciously at her, but of course Abigail might have been agreeing with her after all, so she didn't exactly know what to say.

"But," continued Abigail, "I do not see why one should be an anachronism in an old-time village singing-school. There are many examples in history of Indians who took part in the community life of the white settlers. For instance, we have the Stockbridge Indians in Massachusetts, and the Mohicans who participated in the Revolution in New York, and Sacajawea, the Indian woman who guided Lewis and Clark on their way to Oregon, and ——"

Frances put her fingers in her ears, and Rand and Wilbur were already in hysterics, for Abigail was plainly about to take us through the other forty-five States and Alaska with instances of friendly and educated Indians. "All right, all right," said Frances irritably; "be an Indian boy if you like, Rand. I don't know that it's such a bad idea." But when the boys had gone, she

asked Abigail why she couldn't ever mind her own business.

"I do," said Abigail, unruffled, gazing at Frances, not rudely, but as if she had been something to observe in the laboratory and write conclusions about. Frances fidgeted and began to fuss about the program. It wasn't quite long enough.

"I tell you what would be funny," she said suddenly. "We might have a singing-test—have a new pupil who has to sing alone so as to be classified by the teacher, and have the pupil absolutely without any ear, so as to do nothing but squawk."

All of us agreed that if well done that would be very funny indeed, and then suddenly Abigail went on writing again very industriously. You know how sometimes things go through your mind as clear and quick as a flash of lightning? Well, I hardly needed to look at Frances. I suddenly knew that it had occurred to her that Abigail, whose appearance was quite comic, and who had no ear whatever, could be very funny in

the rôle of the new pupil. And at the same instant I knew that Abigail's pluck wouldn't let her refuse to do the part if it was suggested to her, but somehow she felt awfully bad that she was funny-looking and so different from the rest of us, even though part of the difference was that she was so much brighter.

Well, I suddenly did what was a queer thing for me to do, I am ashamed to say, but anyway I did it. I plucked up enough courage to make a stand right away and alone. I said:

"I want that part!"

"Why, Viola! You're going to sing 'Eileen Aroon' as a solo. You couldn't do that and fail in a test, too," said Frances, not a bit pleased, and, I could see, rather taken aback.

"But don't you see that it would be ever so much funnier if some one whom everybody knows can sing should pretend to fail?" I insisted. She couldn't say that it wouldn't be. I pressed my advantage.

" Give one of the other girls ' Eileen Aroon,' —lots of them sing better than I do. I want to be the new pupil. I think it would be ever so much fun, myself, but lots of people who can sing wouldn't like to seem to fail, not a bit!"

This was true enough, and she didn't quite dare to offer the part to Abigail then, so reluctantly she said I might take it. Abigail never spoke a word the whole time.

I did feel awfully sore about giving up my pet song, and yet when I thought the matter over afterwards I could have no regrets for having acted as I did, and though I did not exactly understand what had made me do it, I felt a lot better than I ever had before—stronger and more independent, I mean. When I told Jocelyn about it all she said perhaps I was finally coming to life, but she gave me a hug also, and agreed that at least the singing-school promised to be a joyous spectacle.

Well, it was, for it had been very interesting to get up, though, as Frances had

promised us, not much trouble. As she was the one who knew just how it should be run, she was the singing-mistress, and she wore a lavender-and-white dress with flounces which had belonged to her grandmother, and a tall white cap with a black-velvet band, and made a very good picture of a New England lady of a century ago. The girls wore gingham dresses and aprons and sunbonnets, and the boys appeared in shirt-sleeves and overalls, and when we came on the platform one by one and curtsied to the singing-mistress and then took our places in front of her desk, all the audience started to laugh immediately, which, as you know if you have ever been in an entertainment that is supposed to be funny, was very encouraging to the actors.

None of us had any speeches to learn, not even Frances, on whom the whole program depended. But she kept up a steady flow of remarks and directions to the class, and asked us many questions which of course we had to answer, and kept rebuking

us and exhorting us until I thought our own real teachers in the audience would never stop chuckling. Of course at our one rehearsal we had arranged a lot of stage business to give her a chance to talk about something besides the songs. The girls whispered and passed notes, and the boys yawned and pulled off the girls' hair-ribbons,—the back row of "trebles" was composed of girls with long hair for this express purpose, and they sat directly in front of the "tenors,"—and then at intervals all would behave and "render selections." The musical program, which had been made up after considerable thought, because it had to be largely composed of old-fashioned songs which we all knew, was as follows, lettered in old English on a big piece of cardboard placed on the platform where all could see it, and anticipate the amusement it provoked, though the volume of applause after each effort came as a surprise to even the hard-working performers and their able leader:

TUNES BY Ye SYNGYNG SCHOLARES

1. Funiculi, Funicula.
2. My Dame Has a Lame Tame Crane (Round).
3. The Owl and the Pussy Cat.
   (By Ye Young Men.)
4. Music in the Air.
   (In four parts.)
5. Eileen Aroon.
   (Solo.)
6. I Went to the Animal Fair.
7. Jingle Bells.
   (By Ye Young Women.)
8. High on a Hill above the Sea.
   (Daskam High School Song.)

The musical performances were interspersed with various features, such as my singing-test, wherein I failed most lamentably and shed quarts of tears, to the accompaniment of continuous laughter, I am glad to say; and playing on the fiddle by Washington Jefferson, who was as black as burnt cork could make him, and who wore a green coat with brass buttons and a white wig made with immense labor out of cotton-batting; and an instructive address with Latin quotations made by the squire (Wil-

bur) to the scholars; and a great deal of impromptu "business" by Rand, who was quite irrepressible in a vast war-bonnet and a splendid Paisley shawl, which he had appropriated out of a trunk in his mother's storeroom, thinking it just old trash, though she told him and everybody else afterwards that it was worth a hundred and twenty dollars at least. And as things turned out, it was one absurd thing which Rand made up on the spur of the minute that had the most tremendous effect on the future of the whole school.

One of the girls who sat in the front row of "trebles" had set off her red-and-white checked gingham frock with a pair of the brightest scarlet stockings ever seen in the world, I am sure, and Rand, perceiving them during the squire's speech, made a striking interruption by beginning to shiver violently inside his Paisley blanket, and then forthwith he knelt down and pretended to warm his hands before the fiery red ankles! It did look too ridiculous for words.

Now of course I had not had much opportunity to observe the visitors that day, though Jocelyn, who was sitting in the row behind them, had an excellent one, as she told me afterwards. The two sitting alongside of Mr. Lane, who was on the aisle, she noticed especially, for he was paying them a great deal of attention. One was quite an elderly lady, and the other, whom Jocelyn took for her daughter, was a girl about sixteen in a big black hat and a yellow sport cape. She was very merry over the whole performance, Jocelyn said, but when Rand suddenly pranced up to the red stockings she simply shrieked right out and couldn't stop for ever so long; and Mr. Lane, who has been known to get much provoked at the girls in his school when they started to laugh and couldn't stop, looked pleased to death! And then, Jocelyn said, the elderly lady, who had been rather stiff, melted and seemed quite enchanted to hear the setting of "Eileen Aroon" because it was the one she had learned when she was a girl and

never seen or heard since, she said. Then Mr. Lane turned around and asked Jocelyn if that setting was not in our school song-book, for, of course not always being present at song-practice, he wasn't sure. And she told him it was, and offered to go and get him one of the books from the music-room, and in this way unfortunately missed the rendering of the "Animal Fair," which was unanimously pronounced to be very spirited. But the lady was very much pleased to receive a copy of the old song, and Jocelyn got back in time to join with the rest of the audience in

> "High on a hill above the sea,
> Chimes ring out their melody,"

and all the rest of our favorite Daskam song, which closed the merriest assembly we had ever held, and, if we had only known it, the most important one!

CHAPTER X

"OURSELVES"

It was on the very next Tuesday that we got the first hint—though then we did not know it was even a hint—of the importance of that assembly. Late that afternoon Jocelyn and I had an unusual experience. We had been studying in the school library, and came down the front steps at just five o'clock to meet Doris Hart coming up. She said she had forgotten her orange sweater, which she had taken off in school because it had been such a warm day, and she had come back for it because it was long-haired Angora wool and too nice to leave in the coat-room all night. As twilight was approaching, we offered to wait for her and then walk home together. She gladly agreed to this, and hurried indoors, and as we two were still standing by the steps, Mr. Lane came out.

"How would you two young ladies like

to step across the street with me and look at our mural painting which Mr. Pollock is completing?" he asked.

We both gave a gasp of delight. This was unheard-of good news! Had the artist finally relented?

"Why, we'd love to!" we both exclaimed at once; and Jocelyn added, "I didn't know ——"

"You didn't know it was being completed?" said Mr. Lane. "Yes, the artist resumed work on it yesterday, and it will be finished by the time we're ready to move into the new building."

"How perfectly gorgeous!" I cried. "And it will be ever so exciting to see it now, Mr. Lane!"

"Well, there's no rule that says students mustn't go into that building when accompanied by the principal," said Mr. Lane good-humoredly; "and Miss Gay's reputation for going into unusual places, with her bodyguard, Miss Bruce, tempts me to invite you."

We laughed at this allusion to our trip up into the belfry, and were also pleased because Mr. Lane's invitation convinced us that he had confidence in us and felt we had had no connection with the accident, whoever might have had. Just at that moment Doris came running out, carrying her sweater. Mr. Lane at once included her when he heard we were waiting for her, and we crossed the street and went up the new steps with quite a thrill. He held open the front door for us while we peeped into the big bare hall, with its great windows along all the front of the building, and its beautiful curving staircase, and then up at the first landing, where Mr. Pollock was standing in his long buff smock, just putting up his brushes for the night.

"May we intrude?" inquired Mr. Lane. "That is, may we if we don't come any farther?"

"Come as far as you like into my school!" urged Mr. Pollock hospitably.

So we all went in, and we three girls stood

down at the front of the hall to look up for a good view of the mural painting while Mr. Lane mounted the stairs to Mr. Pollock's side and the latter pointed out some details of the work to him.

"Isn't it just the loveliest picture in the world for a school?" whispered Jocelyn.

Indeed, it was so lovely that for a moment I couldn't find breath to answer her. We could see it all now, not in bits and dimly, as we had seen it before from the second-story window across the street, but close up, and in all its beauty, which was already great and promised to be splendid when completed. There were six panels across the rear wall, done in the most charming pastel colors, their pale hues blending like a rainbow, and each panel showing girls and boys, or girls or boys, having a wonderful time at school. There was one of workers in a laboratory, and another of artists in a studio, and a third of carpentry students, so natural you could almost smell the shavings! Then there was a most spirited debate going on

in another picture, and in still another the most exciting hockey match between two girls' teams, and what looked like the last minute of a baseball game with the score tied, the figures were so full of action! Why, the whole series made you actually believe that Daskam High School had suddenly come to life right in that hall.

"How do you like the pictures, young ladies?" asked Mr. Pollock, turning around. He was a gray-haired man with a rather severe expression, and yet when he smiled, as he did now, you could see that he might be very jolly. "Do you think they're appropriate?"

Jocelyn was still the only one of us able to speak.

"Oh, we just love them!" she cried enthusiastically. "How do you ever make them so—so alive? Why, they're—*ourselves!*"

Mr. Pollock laughed, but he was tremendously pleased. "I'm glad you've given them that title," he said. "I think per-

haps the main reason I was able to paint them is that I have a young niece who helps me greatly."

"Oh, does she paint, too?" asked Jocelyn respectfully.

"No, she doesn't paint, though she's something of an artist in her own way, but I talked over my ideas for these pictures with her, and she criticised them very helpfully, and gave me some new ones. She insisted, for instance, that the girls should have just as much space as the boys, and if you count the figures in the panels, you'll find just as many girls as boys—no more, though! She said there mustn't be any more, either!"

"Is she in school herself?" asked Jocelyn, much interested, as we all were, of course.

"Not here in Daskam," said Mr. Pollock, "though she's a schoolgirl. She's just sixteen. Our home is in Hollins, a couple of hundred miles away. My niece is really just like my daughter, for my wife and I have brought her up since she was a baby. Well,

I'm glad you like the pictures. I thought that what my girl liked, other young folks probably would like, too."

Then he turned to Mr. Lane again, and Jocelyn whispered to Doris and me that he must be a wonderful uncle, and I thought how proud his niece must be to help him with his work. Then in a minute Mr. Lane started to leave, and we tiptoed a few steps closer to take a final look at the paintings. Mr. Pollock was saying good-by and just finishing a sentence:

"—yes, it was smeared,"—he turned and pointed with a brush to the last painting of the series, that of the baseball game, which was down on the floor-level at the right of the staircase,—" but we got the threads off and it's all right, after all."

" You're not leaving us for some time, I hear? " said Mr. Lane.

" No, sir, I'm staying on after this work is done to make some winter sea-studies. We don't go until after New Year's."

" I hope to see you often, then," said Mr.

Lane. "We're as much in debt to you for your patience as for your art, and that's very deep in debt!"

We then left the building, and as we walked to the corner, where he left us, he explained his remark to us. I think he wanted to give us a hint of what Mr. Pollock had done for the school. We could see ourselves how fine his work was, and we could understand now what pains he had taken to make the pictures suit *our* taste,—young people's taste,—rather than that of grown-up people who weren't going to the school. Then his work had been injured, and to injure an artist's work, Mr. Lane said, is to hurt his feelings so deeply that he wants to give right up! But Mr. Pollock, in spite of his hurt feelings and the fact that the agreement of leaving his work absolutely undisturbed while it was being done had been broken, had decided that it would be better in the end if he finished it for us just as it had been intended in the beginning. Mr. Lane thought undoubtedly his niece's

interest in it had influenced him, and we thought she must be a wonderful girl.

After we turned the corner we three girls went on together several blocks to Doris's street, from which point, after she had bidden us good-night, Jocelyn and I went on to Poplar Avenue. As soon as we were out of earshot, Jocelyn said:

"Vi, did you notice that 'good-night' was the first and only remark Doris made since we walked over to the new building?"

"I did," I answered. "First, I thought she was just tired, and then I thought maybe our childish raptures over the paintings bored her."

"We'd have heard about that if they had," observed Jocelyn mischievously. "Then Doris never said a word to Mr. Pollock, and generally she's so ready to entertain visitors and so good at doing it, too. I wonder if anything is the matter with her."

"I've wondered that, too," I confessed, "and not for the first time just now. You remember, Jocelyn, the other day in the

committee meeting when we were trying to decide about the gift?" Jocelyn nodded sagely. "Did it strike you then as if she and her four friends had arranged beforehand just what they would say to make their plan go through?"

"With great force it struck me," answered Jocelyn. "First she would speak, and then one of them would ask her a question to help her expand her remarks, and then somebody else would approve what she suggested, and then she made that long speech about the house-warming—a very good speech indeed, but it sounded as if it had been written out beforehand."

"That meeting," I declared, "was never called to hold any discussion."

"When the rest of us made suggestions, they sounded more like interruptions."

"She and Archer were absolutely giving signals to each other, though dear knows what they were all about," said I impatiently.

"Oh, well," said Jocelyn soothingly, "if

that crowd was trying to put over some private scheme for having their own way, it fell through, so let's forget it."

"It failed only for the time being, I am positive."

"Why such a warning tone, Viola?"

"Because I have a feeling that one failure won't discourage them from trying to get their own way about *something*. What? I don't know, exactly. But look here, Jocelyn, they're trying awfully hard to be popular."

"They are popular."

"Of course they are, especially since they've fallen in line about giving the bell. But it seems to me they're acting queerly. They can't bear anybody to do anything or get any credit but themselves. You haven't any idea what times we had on that singing-school committee."

"And after all their toil," said Jocelyn whimsically, "you and Rand made two of the big hits in the piece, and Abigail did all the hard work stage-managing!"

"Oh, Jocelyn," said I seriously, "everybody in that entertainment got credit. The performance itself was just an example of what team-work does. What I am worried about is the awful determination to have your own way that seems to possess those gift-committee people we were talking about, and all their crowd. What do they care about anybody else, or law, or order, or rules? If they cared one rap, they wouldn't have tried to jam that house-warming through the committee meeting and shove everybody that didn't agree with their views out of the singing-school. Other people have rights, you know, and it would not have been really honest not to use that money for a gift. They can't like being balked in their plans. I believe they have a new one under way. Doris is acting too queerly."

"Well, they can't do much without Archer, and he's been away sick two days this week," said Jocelyn, who was always inclined to be optimistic. "Whenever he

gets back, he'll have to start work on the year-book at once. That's always so important I don't believe he'll have time for any private schemes for his own crowd."

"I hope he'll have sense enough to appoint you on the publication board," said I vigorously.

"Not a chance!" said Jocelyn, shaking her head. "For that, they're bound to choose people who've shown more executive ability."

"Pshaw! They've got to get some people who can draw."

"If they only would! Viola, if you will swear not to tell one living soul, I will confide to you that there is nothing in the whole world I want more than to help get up that book!"

I squeezed Jocelyn's arm without saying anything. I certainly did hope she could be appointed on that board, for not only did she want it, but it was one of the biggest honors in school. For that reason, though, older students usually got it.

"Well, I'm not going even to think about it," she said resolutely. "Vi, how many more thousand miles do we have to hike to be eligible for the hiking club?"

I was record-keeper for our walks, so I took out my little note-book from my pocket and looked at the last entry. "Twenty-two miles more," I answered.

"Then let's knock off four more to-morrow afternoon, shall we? That sky says clear weather, and I guess a little wind won't scare us."

I looked westward with her, for, as we live by the sea, we know all the sailors' signs of weather, and one of them which forecasts wind is "a bright yellow sky at sunset," and the sky on the horizon was almost ochre. We had just reached my garden-gate.

"Very well," I agreed. "But I tell you there's something in the wind about that school gift!"

And though Jocelyn's arm is long, I got inside the gate and shut it before she could

punish me as I no doubt deserved. But, to the complete amazement of both of us, we found out the very next day what the something was!

CHAPTER XI

THE LETTER FROM THE FOUNDRY

But we did not find it out in the morning, for then the main item of interest was the news that the mural painting was to be completed after all, and at once. Everybody in school was ever so much pleased; indeed, for a short while we all seemed to forget the gloomy autumn weeks we had come through, in the joy of the present moment. Jocelyn and I were the envied of all because Mr. Lane had taken us inside the new building to see the painting, and we were called on many times that morning to describe all the glory of its details to our less fortunate classmates, and of course the information was immediately picked up by our bright little Abigail, who waylaid us in the hall between classes and eagerly extracted the whole story from us again.

"Just to think of you two girls being the

first people taken to see the painting!" she exclaimed. "Well, anyhow, I'll say Mr. Lane has good taste in choosing his company."

"He'd love to know you thought so, Abigail," teased Jocelyn. "He asked Doris, too, you know."

"Doris Hart? Was she there?" queried Abigail, rather taken aback for once in her life, as Jocelyn had meant her to be. However, she rallied quickly. "Did she like it?"

"The painting? Why, we all were just wild about it," said I. "There she is now, if you want to ask her yourself."

But Abigail didn't offer to, and, indeed, few people even as fresh as she was would have asked Doris unnecessary questions just then, she looked so tired. She hadn't any color at all, and she wore a frown of worry between her eyes. Anyway, when she saw Abigail she came straight over toward the three of us and spoke to her first.

"Abigail, does your father think Archer is very sick?"

"He didn't say so," answered Abigail; "he said he had a terrible attack of indigestion on Monday, but he thinks he'll be all right before long."

"Oh, I'm glad," said Doris with relief; "everybody has been saying he was awfully sick. Two of the boys went to the Macklyn House to see him yesterday, but they weren't allowed to. His father told them Doctor Sims didn't want him to see anybody yet, and when they asked Mr. Macklyn how he had got sick he said he absolutely didn't know himself. So I was afraid something bad might be the matter."

"No, I don't think so," said Abigail.

Doris moved away, and I said:

"It will be too bad if Archer isn't back pretty soon. People are beginning to grumble because he hasn't even begun to appoint the year-book committee. Some of them think he's delaying just as he did in regard to the school meeting last fall. He really should have begun to make the appointments last week—that would have

been about the time they always start work on the year-book."

"Tell me what that is," commanded Abigail.

I had no objections to obeying, and neither had Jocelyn, for *Daskam Days and Doings,* as the year-book is called, is perhaps our favorite school enterprise. It is started late in the fall by a committee representing all four classes, and its object is to make a beautiful, interesting record of each year at Daskam. This one, which would come out late in the spring, the regular time of publication, would be the tenth issued, and it would join the long row of bright-colored volumes on the shelf in the library where our recreation books are, and would be pored over by generations of eager Daskam students, just as the other nine had been pored over by ourselves and our predecessors in leisure hours. The committee wrote all the history and the verse and the reports and the records that filled the book, and they drew the illustrations, and took the

photographs, and decided on the binding and the printing, and collected the advertisements and read the proof and finally sold the book, and, if possible, made just enough money on it to give the school some excursion or entertainment. And everybody who had ever been on a *Days and Doings* board said there was no fun like it in all the world; and the very ablest and most gifted students gave the best they had in them to make the history of each year a shining mark in the story of Daskam. And it had seemed to me last year, when I went on the excursion we took to Silver Island,—lunch on the boat, and a visit to a Revolutionary general's headquarters with a secret passage, and a field-day afterwards,—that I had never seen the school spirit so wonderful as the year-book seemed to have made it.

So naturally everybody was more than eager for work to be begun on it promptly, and, as the day wore on and there was no further news about Archer's return, we all began to forget how happy we had been that

morning over " Ourselves," which had been unanimously chosen as the name for our painting, and to feel gloomy premonitions about the year-book. I felt very glad when my classes were over and it was time to go walking with Jocelyn at half-past three, which was the time we had agreed on. But doubtless I should have vastly preferred the gloom about the year-book, had I known the discovery just awaiting us both.

We came upon it in the most unexpected place. It certainly should have been Jocelyn who made the investigation, but it was I who happened to get into the unexpected place first that time.

I had agreed to go up to her studio for her, as she said that about half-past three she thought she would have just finished a charcoal study she was making. Advanced art students, like her, work alone much of the time, and the teacher comes in every hour or so and helps them. When I got up to the top floor, there didn't seem to be a soul around. All was as quiet as the middle of

the night as I walked down the hall to Jocelyn's studio, but just before I reached the door I heard a queer squeaky noise coming out of another door which was just this side of that studio. I knew it was the door which opened into the art-department storeroom. It stopped a second, so I went right on, giving it no farther thought. But I had not gone more than a couple of steps when the noise began again.

I thought it must be our janitor's cat, a great favorite in the school, named, owing to his intrepidity and warlike appearance, Colonel Whiskers. The Colonel's fearlessness occasionally leads him into situations more difficult to get out of than into, and I thought he must have wandered into the storeroom and had the door shut on him, so I opened it and looked in. And there, among all the plaster casts and stacks of paper and boxes of pencils and thumb-tacks and bottles of fixative, lying on the floor and weeping her heart out in the most terrible distress, was—Doris Hart!

She didn't move, and I saw she hadn't heard me. I was immensely thankful, and shut the door noiselessly at once, glad beyond words that I had not happened to call out to the Colonel. And then through the door suddenly came that queer little noise again, only a trifle louder than before. Doris evidently was strangling herself in an attempt to choke her sobs, but she couldn't do it. I was afraid she was losing control of herself. I did wish I could help her, but I realized that would have been a very hard thing to do. Plainly she had come up here to be alone. I was in a terribly embarrassing position, but almost immediately it was clear to me that she would very likely be discovered in such a way that she would be in a worse one, and she knew I had always liked her. I really had to try to help her, so I screwed up my courage, rattled the door-handle a bit, then popped in for one instant and said all in one breath, "Excuse me, Doris, I merely wish to tell you that you can be heard in the hall," and started

to pop out again as fast as possible. Indeed, I had nearly got the door shut when I heard her speaking faintly: "Viola! Viola!"

I went in again, shut the door, and kept my hand on the handle, without a word. Doris was sitting up, and she looked as if she had been crying for hours. She didn't say a word, but I didn't think she wanted me to go away. After a long time I said quietly, "Can I do anything to help you, Doris?"

"Honestly, I don't know!" she gasped. "But it's got to a point where I've got to find out if somebody that's honest and decent can't do something!"

"Do tell me what the matter is," I urged, naturally quite at sea. But she began to cry again so hard she couldn't speak. Then finally she pulled the following letter out of the pocket of her orange sweater, and thrust it at me without a word. First bewildered, then aghast, I read and re-read these amazing lines:

The Gartland Foundry

To the Secretary,
Daskam High School General Organization.

Dear Sir:

We are in receipt of your recent order for a bell to complete the Daskam memorial chimes.

The price of a small bell to fulfill the requirements described in your letter will be just four hundred dollars ($400.00). We are making you a special price for an educational institution, and have this day given orders for mixing the metal, so we may promise delivery by New Year's as desired.

We are quite satisfied with your reference, Mr. Daniel Macklyn of the Macklyn House, Daskam, but since it is our regular custom to require a deposit on all orders, you will find inclosed preliminary bill for one hundred and fifty dollars ($150.00). The balance, two hundred and fifty dollars ($250.00), can be paid on delivery.

Assuring you of our appreciation of this favor, we are

Faithfully yours,
THE GARTLAND FOUNDRY.

"Can I do anything to help you, Doris?"—*Page 163.*

CHAPTER XII

A SORRY TALE

"Do you mean to say you've actually gone and ordered the bell!" I gasped, absolutely dumfounded.

"I didn't order it!" cried Doris sharply.

I looked at the letter again. "Of course the general organization secretary did," I assented, remembering that this was Fred Harley, a third-year boy who was forever trailing Archer; "but ——"

"I tell you, Viola, I had nothing to do with giving that order," sobbed Doris. "But it's my fault just the same! O dear! O dear! What shall I do? I'll never get over this as long as I live! Oh, why was I such a dreadful, wicked little fool? O dear! what *shall* I do?"

I couldn't get another word out of her, though I tried my best, and I was nearly at my wits' end when suddenly the door

burst open and in bounded Jocelyn in her customary breezy manner! Maybe she wasn't staggered at the sight of Doris on the floor and me standing beside her!

I signed to her to say nothing and go away, and held the letter so she didn't notice it, but Doris looked up and saw me.

"Oh, let her see it, too!" she cried desperately. "All the gift committee will have to know about it—everybody will, but I suppose the committee will first."

Then she buried her face in her arms and began to cry again.

But Jocelyn would not take the letter just then. She said nothing, but she stepped to the wall where the handle of the storeroom skylight was, and let in some fresh air. Then she ran out into the hall and came back directly with a glass of water, which she made Doris drink. Then she took from a shelf the atomizer of fixative which she had come into the storeroom to get, as she had finished her charcoal study and wished to fix it, and whispered to me to wait for her, and

not to leave the storeroom until she came back.

In five minutes she came back in her outdoor things, with the atomizer half-empty in one hand and Doris's things in the other. By that time Doris was quieter. I then gave Jocelyn the letter and she read it, and was as shocked as I had been to learn that somebody had actually ordered the bell outright before knowing whether or not it was within our means, or consulting the school any farther.

Finally, it seemed as if somebody would have to speak, so I broke the silence.

"Doris," I said, as gently as I could, "as Archer Macklyn's father is mentioned as a reference in this letter, Archer must have given his name. No one else would have done that. And you know he told the gift committee, when we first met, that his father had offered to let him use his name if we needed a reference. So Archer must be responsible for this order."

"Well," admitted Doris reluctantly, "he

did actually give it, but—it was really my fault."

"How?"

She looked from me to Jocelyn with an air of bravado, and then suddenly hurled two sentences at us in one breath:

"If you want to hear a long story in four words, here it is: *I smudged that painting!*"

We were simply thunderstruck! We stared at her and then at each other in the wildest incredulity, but she went right on:

"Yes, it's true! You know the damage was discovered one morning? Well, the afternoon before, late, I was in the new building, and I—I fell up against that end panel—the baseball picture—and it was damp, and I had on this long-haired Angora sweater and it smeared the paint!"

"Smeared"—the very word Mr. Pollock had used yesterday!

"I suppose," I murmured, as Doris suddenly seemed to have run down in her nar-

rative, " that you just couldn't bear to come out and say you had done it."

" N-no, I couldn't," she confessed, but somehow her answer sounded incomplete. " I was perfectly aghast that the damage cost so much ——"

Her voice trailed away. Neither Jocelyn nor I said anything. We knew it would have been most difficult for Doris to find a hundred dollars quickly. Her mother was a widow, just managing to put her and her little sister through school with the help of their elder brother, a young clerk in a bank. Yet we knew Doris was personally entirely straight in all her dealings. Again I couldn't help wondering if she was telling all she knew, as she went on:

" As long as it was possible to fix the smudge I kept hoping the matter would be forgotten, and I hoped that some day, somehow, I might find a chance to make reparation. But the offense which I found had been given to the artist made me very uneasy, in spite of the fact that nobody could

discover who was responsible for the smudge. Still I hoped everything was safe, until Wilbur brought out that editorial of his in the *Green-and-White*. Then everybody started all over again to say the most dreadful things about the person to blame, and I knew somebody must know what had happened if Wilbur said so. It didn't make any difference that he shouldn't have said so that way,—the fact was that somebody did know. Then we had that gift-committee meeting. I thought a scheme to please everybody, such as the house-warming proposal, would quiet the fuss. But there was that conceited, sniffing Abigail Sims getting on my nerves, and there you were, Viola, with a real idea, and John Parker failed us and wouldn't vote with us after all. And then everybody went just crazy over the idea of giving a bell, and got so mad when any one suggested it might be a risk, and that idiot Rand Potter made everybody laugh at us with his ridiculous riddle, so that finally we gave in and agreed to the

proposal. And then, right at that very instant almost, I found out —— O dear! *Dear!*"

"What did you find out, Doris?" I asked quite firmly, for I saw it would be impossible to get her—or any one else, for quite obviously we were all in it—out of this scrape unless the whole story was told.

Her eyes flashed with mortification as she replied:

"I found out who knew about the accident to the painting! It was that prying little Abigail, though how she did, I give up!"

"For pity's sake!" I ejaculated under my breath. "How did you ever learn that, Doris?"

"You remember I got a warning-card in chemistry? Well, I've had to attend certain oral quizzes in the elementary course, to review part of the work, and there was one of those the hour after the school meeting had voted for the bell. I got into class just at roll-call, and the only seat left was next

to Abigail. Well, she was called on to name some commercial uses of turpentine, and of course she knew just dozens, and the last she mentioned was a solvent in making paint. And when she sat down beside me again, she sniffed just the way she did that day at the gift-committee meeting, and—I suddenly realized that then, days before, she had smelled the turpentine on my sweater which I had used to take the paint off with! It was the first day I had worn it since the accident. I did have to use a good deal to get all the spots off, I know, but I aired it so well! I'll warrant nobody else noticed it—it took that fresh, nosey child at the other end of the table!"

Serious as the situation was, any one would have wanted to laugh at Abigail's awful keenness and startling originality. I just managed not to, and I said:

"Doris, perhaps you are imagining things. You certainly have no proof that Abigail knew. If she had suspicions, she never said a word about them. Whatever

her shortcomings, she's not mean nor underhanded. Nobody has connected you in any way with the accident."

"That child never has suspicions, she's the sort that always has facts," declared Doris gloomily and with much truth. "Perhaps she can hold her tongue. But anyway, I knew she knew, and I was absolutely afraid of what she might do if she chose to talk. The first year is the biggest class, as she is fond of pointing out to the rest of us, and they absolutely idolize her, and kids that age never have any sense. So I told Archer what I had learned. He didn't like it a bit, but he said he had a plan to fix things for me. And the next day he told me he had simply gone ahead and ordered the bell! I was even more frightened then, but he said he had sent in the order so we'd surely have the bell by New Year's and then everybody would be pleased and our crowd would get the credit. And he said there was no reason why we shouldn't take a chance when the school was willing to pay a tax, if neces-

sary, which would bring the fund available to two hundred and twenty-five dollars. Oh, it didn't seem possible that a small bell would cost more than that!"

"And then what?" I asked, as she stopped again in despair.

"And then this letter came to Archer last Monday, before school. That's why he didn't come—the shock made him terribly sick," said Doris with a groan. "I never knew a thing about it until this noon, when he sent the letter over with a note, because he was afraid the whole thing might come out any time now, and he wanted me to be forewarned. He says he'll be back to-morrow. I just crawled up here and collapsed. That's all."

She was indeed a forlorn spectacle, the forlornest I think I ever saw, and you would have had to be sorry for her, no matter what you thought of the way she'd acted, for she was the person who was suffering the most as a result of her conduct.

"Doris," said Jocelyn, speaking for the

first time, vigorously but kindly, "it wouldn't be true not to say you are in a dreadful mess, for you are; but certainly you've done the right thing in owning up, and I hope all the rest of those to blame for that smudge will do the same."

Doris jumped! Jocelyn had made a ten-strike.

"No, you didn't mention names, not even Archer's before Viola said he must know of the order for the bell," continued Jocelyn calmly. "But Fred Harley wrote that order, surely at Archer's direction. And at the gift-committee meeting your friends were all lined up to put that house-warming plan through. They were all supporting you, Doris, but nobody could have thought it was just devotion. It looked more like coöperation!"

"And, Doris," I put in gently, "you know there was a good deal of fuss and feeling when Frances was getting up the singing-school—she was so awfully eager for special credit. It was just a regular as-

sembly program, and she was simply set on giving no one a show who wasn't especially a friend of hers. I know it was a howling success, but the way she ran it made talk."

"And, Doris," said Jocelyn firmly, as Doris refused to speak, but sat looking at the floor, "you said you went into the new building that afternoon; well, so did some other people. That new note-book they picked up is the kind used only in the history and English courses, and you don't take either of those subjects. And there were several trails of gravel along the hall, and they ran side by side in the same direction, for the night-watchman said so." Still Doris did not say one word. "I do not see," finished Jocelyn, "why you should take all the blame. The others should confess to their share of responsibility also."

"They won't, though," whispered Doris finally. "You're right, of course—there were others. That was why I kept quiet. They wouldn't agree to tell. I wanted to,

I tried to make them, but there were several who wouldn't agree to do so, and the rest of us were afraid we might involve them if we said anything. Oh, I've been miserable, miserable, holding my tongue when I was principally to blame, though! Of course you've guessed that a crowd of us did go into the new building together that afternoon when no one was around."

"Oh, why?" I asked.

"Simply because I was a fool! We were all coming from the tennis-courts across the gravel running-track, and I proposed going in at the side door and walking through to the front door, just so we could feel smart because we had broken a rule. But when we got in, everybody started skylarking, and I was pushed against the wall on that picture."

"What are you going to do about it now?" inquired Jocelyn sympathetically.

"I don't know!" Doris threatened to burst into tears again. "Do help me, girls! You both would have to know very soon

about the giving of the order for the bell, being on the gift committee, but—well, I told you about the accident as I did because —well, because I thought you'd know what to do."

"I wonder what made you think that!" ejaculated Jocelyn in real surprise. "Not, of course, but that I should be very glad to do anything I could to help you."

"And I," I added eagerly, though I, too, felt very inexperienced in such complex difficulties.

"Well," said Doris very quietly,—she had lost her bravado some time ago,—"the truth is, I know I haven't been acting well for a long time. I didn't like rules. I wanted to be free of them, and I was. And it's no good; it doesn't work. All it does is bring you trouble, and that's not what somebody else says,—it's what I've found out myself. I found it out by being so bound to have my own way that I lost a mark, and worried my mother terribly, because she knew I couldn't get a good position next year if I

should fail to graduate; and I found it out by spoiling our painting and then sneaking about it, and by leading my whole crowd of friends astray with the final result of involving the entire school in this terrible mess—this order for the bell."

"But, Doris," I interrupted, "don't be unfair to yourself. You never would have given that order ——"

"Viola," she interrupted me, "I hope that's true. But you cannot say how far you wouldn't go if you're tied up so tight to your own will that you won't consider anybody else. Anyway, I am in large part responsible for this disaster, because I led other people on the wrong track. I think I am a miserable citizen of this community —I do truly. But I should really like to be a good one, and though at first I didn't see how I could be, I remembered that it was you two girls who thought of getting the bell for the reason that it would play the highest note in the national anthem. I thought that was really a beautiful idea,

though of course it probably occurred to you only in a practical way. I'm sure, anyhow, that it wouldn't occur to any one who wasn't pretty straight—who didn't really love our national anthem because of understanding the ideals it stood for; and I thought maybe you could help me to go straight in the future, too."

We were both so touched we could hardly speak. What an admission that was from that girl, so much older and more prominent than either of us, so fascinating, and now so humiliated but so brave, nevertheless! But you couldn't have been embarrassed—she was too sincere.

"Why," said I finally, "absolutely all I ever thought of in suggesting the bell was that its note—'free,' you know—would complete the song. But, Doris, I certainly respect you highly for the way you talk, and I'll stand by you."

"So will I," promised Jocelyn warmly, "and since you've asked for help, there's only one thing for you to do, Doris. Tell

Mr. Lane the main facts you've told us about the accident. Then since, as you say, the story of the order for the bell cannot be kept secret any longer, can't you inform Archer to-morrow that you're going to tell Mr. Lane your part of the story and urge him to tell his? I think he'll follow your lead. He must respect your courage and honesty. I don't believe he has been any happier than you were."

"You see," I added, as Doris hesitated just a second, "in that way you need mention no names. Each of you can just give the facts you are responsible for, and certainly if you do that, those friends of yours who wanted originally to tell about the accident to the painting will probably be glad to follow suit."

So she consented to do this first thing in the morning, as it was now very late in the afternoon, and promised, in the meantime, to get rested, for she was all worn out. So she put on her things which Jocelyn had so thoughtfully brought, and, as the art teacher

had gone home after helping Jocelyn fix her drawing, we got Doris out of the storeroom and then out of the building without attracting any attention, and took her home. And then, as we were both pretty tired ourselves, and had completely forgotten about our intended walk, we parted at my gate without further discussion of the startling revelations of the afternoon. But what was uppermost in both our minds was: What will the school do when they know about the order? What will they think of having had it given over their heads, and what will they do about the terrible expense they have been involved in? The whole thing would have to come out in a day or two. Everybody in our little community was concerned in it.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BOMBSHELL BURSTS

The whole of the next day I felt as if I were holding my breath, waiting for a bombshell to burst. But nothing happened. It was one of the quietest days of routine I ever remembered. Neither Jocelyn nor myself saw Doris except at a distance, and while Archer appeared once more, very limp indeed, his languor was of course attributed to his having been sick. The hours went by so uneventfully, as a matter of fact, that by evening I was almost wondering if we had imagined the tragic scene and sorry tale which we had beheld and heard in the art-department storeroom. Yet of course it would have been impossible for Mr. Lane to burst right out with the news the minute Doris told it to him. No doubt he had to decide what action to take. Still, long as it seemed at the time, the school did not

really have to wait a great while for a sensation.

The next morning Mr. Lane got up at the end of assembly, very grave indeed, so grave that he cast a sort of chill over us all before he began to speak. He told us that he wished the general organization to hold a special meeting the following day to consider a serious emergency. Then he made a speech that none of us, surely, will ever forget, and, though of course I didn't take it down, I can write it almost word for word.

"I have always tried to encourage you all," he began, "to use your own best judgment, as far as possible, in dealing with matters which affect your whole school community. I am now going to ask you to exert this as you never did before, for I have a most deplorable announcement to make. The bell you hoped to add to our chimes—a very suitable gift, I may say, given the necessary time to work for it—was ordered outright a few days ago!"

The school gave a gasp and looked wild-eyed, and were sure they hadn't heard correctly.

"Instead," continued Mr. Lane, "of sending for estimates of cost—as had been directed by your meeting—the order was sent outright, on the foolish and outrageous assumption that one might 'take a chance' that a small bell would not cost much. I have no time just now to comment on the conceit which prompted such an assumption, because I wish to emphasize the fact that this lawless act was a serious exceeding of the authority given to the leaders of the student body by the students who placed them in power as their representatives. If a bell had been found feasible as a gift, it would have been for the student organization to order it, not for individuals. They did so illegally, therefore.

"While they now see and regret their fault, they cannot escape its consequences. Neither can the rest of you. As always, disregard of common welfare by individuals

involves the whole community to which they belong. Their excuses are that if they had not sent in the order, the bell might not have been ready for New Year's, and you all would have been displeased. You may judge of the value of those excuses yourselves. As a result of the order, the foundry has already started casting the bell, and it must now be paid for. It will cost four hundred dollars."

This time nobody gasped. The breath was absolutely knocked out of all of us. In the midst of a perfectly appalling silence, Mr. Lane concluded:

"You have already estimated that this sum is two hundred and fifty dollars more than you have for payment. And now I am glad to mention the one encouraging feature of this whole disaster. The startling result of this lawless order has finally shamed a student into confessing responsibility for the accident to the mural painting in the new building. I wish to commend this student, who thus not only regained

self-respect, but set an example of honesty which, you will be glad to hear, inspired others who learned of it. Eight students in all have informed me that they were also concerned in the accident. They will return to your treasury, through my office, the hundred dollars you spent for the damage they caused.

" Your problem, therefore, at the meeting to-morrow, will be to discuss any plans you would like to suggest to me for raising the balance necessary to complete payment for the bell—one hundred and fifty dollars. I have just two concluding points to make: first, that the history of school so far this year, in addition to the financial difficulties you are involved in now, has caused me to order the suspension of all plans for any yearbook; second, I commend to you all private reflection on the far-reaching results of disobedience to rules, to laws, to the rights of others. You have yourselves seen such conduct at first hand; you have witnessed its results; it has been part of your own com-

munity life. Are you sure you have protested against it effectively? And do you think it is so very attractive after all?"

We were all so numb we could hardly get up and march out of assembly, and all the teachers of morning classes must have had an easy time with discipline. Nobody moved a finger unless instructed specifically to do so. However, by recess the numbness had not only disappeared, but it had been replaced by red-hot wrath, and if there was anything we were angrier about than having the order for the bell given over our heads, or being swamped financially, it was the idea of having no year-book that year. That was really a terrible blow.

But it stunned us so that perhaps at first we didn't really think about it as much as you might expect, for of course it came out that Archer had ordered the bell and that some of his friends had concurred in this order. Happily Doris's name was not especially mentioned in the matter of the bell, and nobody spoke of her at all in connection

with the smudged painting, for of course Mr. Lane had made his announcement very skillfully. The identity of the persons who had confessed was concealed entirely, and not only that, but the episode of the smudge was now submerged in more pressing troubles. It had been confessed to and reparation made for the money spent, so we no longer thought much about it. But we did denounce the whole G. O. administration up and down, and right and left, until everybody in that school must have said something that would have been better left unsaid, and then we proceeded on a strange program of setting affairs to rights.

If we had an excuse, and I don't think we had, it was that our nerves were upset by disappointment and shock. Three of the girls cried so hard they couldn't go to afternoon classes, and another one, who went, and was corrected by the French teacher for saying "*J'ai allé,*" shut her mouth up tight and absolutely declined to go on reciting; and the whole elementary cooking-class went on

a dish-washing strike for fifteen minutes, and Jocelyn and I performed a frightful deed which filled us with horror half an hour later, though at the time it seemed a most exalted expression of true friendship. And two of the boys who loved each other like brothers, as a rule, got into a fight on the playing-field, and a lot of the other boys mixed right in without knowing or caring what it was all about,—nobody knows yet,—and there was a perfect epidemic of nose-bleeds. And another boy tasted some pink stuff out of a test-tube in the laboratory and flopped over on the floor, and had to be taken home in a taxi and stay in bed four days. He said he was lonely and didn't know what else to do, and I think that was really what ailed all of us that terrible afternoon.

Jocelyn and I finally felt so desperately unhappy that we decided we must do something active at once, so we agreed to make up our walk we had missed two days before, although it was plainly going to rain di-

rectly. So as soon as school was over we walked up Daskam Ridge inland, and then struck off on the Shore Road, which skirts the harbor through the sand-dunes all the way around the basin to Stillwater, a little town right across the bay from Daskam. It was about three miles to Stillwater, and the gray sand with its gray-green grasses blowing in the rising gale, and the gray sky and the gray mist hovering over the mouth of the harbor and coming slowly in just suited our mood.

But we had gone about a mile and a half, hardly speaking a word except once when Jocelyn said for the fifth time that day that she couldn't bear to think about the year-book and so had dismissed it from her thoughts, when we at last realized how foolish we had been. Suddenly a large drop of rain splashed down on Jocelyn's nose, there was a loud *whoo-oo-oosh* all through the air, and the storm was upon us.

There were houses in sight, for the Shore Road is open all the way around the basin,

but the nearest one was a long way ahead toward Stillwater, and we didn't know the people who lived there, anyhow. Sand-dunes did not seem so picturesque as before. They afforded no shelter whatever, and so we ignominiously turned around and ran back to Daskam!

We ran as long as we could, and then we simply had to take to walking; then presently we got our breath back and had to take to talking, both of us felt so humiliated. "I never expected to feel like a criminal," I began gloomily, turning up the collar of my sweater around my neck, only to find it soaking wet already. "Ugh!"

This exclamation may have really been more on account of the wet collar than anything else, but Jocelyn took it as an expression of repentance.

"I guess we did very wrong," she murmured faintly, "but I don't just exactly know what to do."

My silence showed that I felt just the same way. The deed we had committed

was of a sort, indeed, that I hardly think most people would know exactly how to repair, for it indeed demanded some sort of reparation. One of the girls in our class, who is a great friend of ours, had got D on her Latin prose paper. She was very sore, because she nearly always gets A, and we were both very mad, because we liked her so much, and we knew Mr. Hastings could not have marked her properly. After we had looked over our papers in class, they were recollected in order to have the marks recorded in the teacher's record-book. So Jocelyn and I got madder and madder about that D, and finally, without saying a word to anybody, we went to Mr. Hastings's classroom during recess, because we knew he always kept his class-papers in piles on top of his large desk, and we took that paper out of the second-year pile and tore it up!

As I suggested, we felt quite noble for two or three minutes afterwards, and then we wondered if we had had any right to

take it, and then we knew we hadn't had, but what could we do about it? So we had done something wrong because we were angry at other people who had done something wrong; and the whole school was in no end of difficulties about the bell which we had thought was going to be such a wonderful gift for the new building; and we were soaking wet, and not going to have any year-book! In desperation we both fetched the deepest possible breath, and started to run again!

But we were much luckier than we deserved to be. We had come to the end of the Shore Road and had reached the Ridge again, and were panting down the street leading to the school, which we had to pass to get to our own street, when we heard our names called just behind us, at a little distance above our heads. We turned around, and there stood Abigail Sims on the veranda of her home, which was just a couple of doors beyond the school, beckoning to us. We made a dash through the heaviest

downpour yet, and landed, dripping and mortified but pathetically grateful, before a large open fire in the living-room of her bungalow.

CHAPTER XIV

DRAGON'S EYES

"I'LL fix you up!" was Abigail's greeting.

Well, so she did. She did not say we were wet; she did not ask us what we were doing out in the rain. She took our sweaters and shoes into the kitchen to dry, and gave us some of hers to wear in the meantime. We heard her telling the cook to make some cocoa, and the cook said: "Yas'm, honey. Do yo'-all want some hot cookies, too?" which showed that Abigail must be much esteemed in the home.

It certainly was a nice home. The living-room was very pretty, with a great window that covered nearly half the front of the bungalow, commanding an extensive view up and down the street, and including such features as a whole new colony of charming little homes being built just up the hill,

and the fine new school building just across the way in the other direction. The fire made the room very homelike. All around the walls were many cases full of learned-looking books, which added to the intimate appearance, and a piano and piles of music. And in one corner was a small desk—Abigail's, no doubt, for there was a shelf of girls' stories over it, which certainly were her prizes, and near by was a radio set. The desk and the radio-cabinet were all strewn with tools—a hammer and a wrench and screw-drivers.

Abigail came back promptly from the kitchen.

"We've interrupted you, I'm afraid," said Jocelyn, glancing at the tools with polite regret.

"Yes, I was fixing my radio," said Abigail truthfully, "but it doesn't matter; I'll finish now, if you don't mind. I want to tune in to WHIZ in a little while. They have a feature on the program called 'For Girls to Make,' and this afternoon they're

going to give directions for making a certain kind of necklace."

She picked up the hammer and began to pound something efficiently.

"How exciting that sounds!" said I. "I mean about the necklace, of course. We wouldn't interrupt such a thrilling occupation for anything."

"It is nice, isn't it?" concurred our hostess, poking something with a screwdriver. "I built this set myself, and it works awfully well. I meant to stay at school and study this afternoon, but after this morning I just had to come home and work and work and work! But I'm glad I did, because I saw you two rushing along in the rain, through that big window. You'd have been drowned before you could get home, and they'll be gladder to see you there when you're dryer."

As usual, there was much truth in Abigail's observations, and Jocelyn, seeming to feel that this called for truth in return, remarked with a faint and hesitant giggle that

we had gone on a walk to Stillwater to help make up our record for the hiking-club membership.

"I'd better get WHYE for you," said Abigail. "They're giving weather forecasts."

"Well," declared Jocelyn defensively, "we had to do *something*. You said so yourself!"

We all laughed, and at this point the cocoa and cookies put in an appearance and our tongues were loosed.

"Did you ever in all your life pass such a day as this?" I sighed. "What are we coming to, anyhow?"

"We're coming to what we deserve," answered Abigail darkly and with appalling certainty.

"What?" said I.

"What?" said Jocelyn.

"Do you mean we deserve to be plunged into debt and to forfeit our year-book?" I demanded, quite outraged at the idea.

Abigail paused. "Maybe I made too

sweeping an assertion," she said more cautiously. "I know I do that sometimes. Perhaps it would be more exact to say that we have come to what we might expect."

Jocelyn looked puzzled at this cryptic utterance, but interested, nevertheless. "You'll have to explain that if you want me to understand it," she said with an inquiring smile.

"Well," said Abigail instructively, "we all agree that this has been a very awful day, all full of bad news that angered and upset everybody. We all felt we had to do something at once, to relieve our feelings. But we all did the wrong thing. I mean myself, too. Do you know what I did? I cut history. And I love it, and I was all prepared. I just decided I wouldn't go! That'll be something to attend to tomorrow. Yes, what each of us did was to blame anybody—everybody—but ourselves for that order for the bell, and for losing the year-book, and then take a revenge for it on ourselves!"

"How could it be our fault that we lost the year-book?" frowned Jocelyn.

"What have we done so far this year that we could put in it?" countered Abigail.

This was one of those questions that leaves you gasping. Jocelyn scowled at me as if I ought to answer it because she couldn't, but I couldn't either. However, I said rather feebly:

"Everybody thinks it's pretty hard that there should always be a gap on the book-shelf in the library where the year-books all stand, just because a few people exceeded their rights ——"

"I think that crowd are all frights, and they had no business at all to order the bell," interrupted Abigail with a kind of large-hearted denunciation which somehow didn't seem at all personal; "but their giving the order is not the reason we can't have the year-book. At least"—she made an obvious effort to be a little less assertive—"I don't think so."

"What is the reason, then?" I asked.

"I think," replied Abigail carefully, "I *think* it's because the rest of us have let them exceed their rights all along. We haven't attended to our own business."

"Our own business?" repeated Jocelyn, puzzled, as I was, too. "What do you mean?"

"The life we all live together," said Abigail promptly and simply. "Isn't that everybody's own business?"

"Oh, I see what you mean!" I exclaimed. "You're talking about what Mr. Lane said this morning. You mean that crowd have disregarded the common welfare and so dragged the rest of us into the mess they made."

Abigail looked at me patiently and waited at least five seconds before replying accurately:

"I am talking about what he said, but what he said was that disregard of common welfare by individuals involves the whole community to which they belong. The rest of us are individuals too, aren't we? And

we've let those people do practically what they wanted to, all year. I think he meant all of us had disregarded the common welfare. Don't you remember, at the end of his speech, he asked us if we thought we had protested effectively against lawlessness?"

"Well, haven't we?" cried Jocelyn indignantly.

"No! Not effectively," returned Abigail boldly. "Nobody made any special fuss when Archer Macklyn violated the constitution and didn't call that fall meeting on time. Nearly all of us sympathized with the boys and girls that were put off teams because they wouldn't study ——"

"Well, anyway, everybody in school was mortified to death about that smudge," I put in defensively.

"Mortified? What good's that?" demanded Abigail ruthlessly. "Wilbur was the only person who even made an attempt to unite public opinion against it because it was a scandal. And from the date of that

smudge, that crowd in power has simply tried to get possession of the school and to decide how everything should be done, just to further their own ends, and we saw it and let them! Look at the way Frances Walton owned that singing-school—though you did hit her an awful clip, Viola!"

Abigail's black eyes flashed one sharp glance at me. She was facing the window, and I saw what I had never noticed before, that the rim of iris around those black pupils was of the most liquid clearness, a very pale blue that was piercing and yet shining, and gave wonderful character to her plain, clear-cut face. I realized that she understood perfectly why I had insisted on taking the part of the singing-pupil,—that I had done it on her account. I said quickly:

"Rand, the Good Indian, also struck a blow for freedom!"

"Lots of us have struck blows," said Abigail, "but we don't seem able to make a charge together. Our leading set can, though. They stick together. That's where

they're strong and we're weak. That's how they get away with so much."

"I don't see that we've been so terrible," said I, trying to make a last stand. "Mr. Lane didn't scold anybody but them, anyhow!"

"If a bad child eats too much candy you cure his stomach-ache before you scold him at all," said Abigail, the doctor's daughter.

Jocelyn, who had been listening carefully, broke into a ripple of laughter. "I understand!" she nodded. "What you mean, Abigail, is this: You always have to clear away wreckage before you can rebuild. In other words, we'll have to settle this mess about the bell satisfactorily before we can do anything else—before we should ever be fit to think about having a year-book, for instance. And if both the leaders and the led are to blame, why, I suppose both of them will have to settle the mess together!"

"Something to think about there!" said Abigail with the first grin I had ever seen on her face.

Then it was just time for the feature in which she was interested to be broadcast, and she tuned into WHIZ, explaining, as we waited a moment, that her mother, who, it seemed, had gone to the movies, had been so heart-brokenly lamenting the fact that Abigail had spent all her allowance on radio-parts instead of putting some of it into personal ornamentation, as intended, that she felt obliged to demonstrate to her mother the practical and artistic value of radio by making a necklace, and she invited us to join her in making some for ourselves.

This promised to be a delightful piece of work, and as soon as we had taken down the directions, Abigail led the way into her kitchen. It was well that the colored cook was so good-natured, or we might not have had a chance to carry them out, but as she just loved company and things to eat, and necklaces, too, she gave us all the salt and white cornmeal in the house, and we set to work.

We heated the mixture gently with just

a little water, and it quickly turned into an interesting rubbery mass, from which we took lumps and rolled them in our palms into little balls, any size we liked. We colored part of the mixture with red ink, and the balls came out the sweetest pink shade in the world; and Abigail got all the blue inks in the house and experimented with them, making lovely blue balls of different shades. Before the balls, or perhaps I should call them the beads, were dry, we punched holes through them so they could be strung. They were very heavy and effective. We made dozens and dozens, each of us designing a necklace for herself. Abigail's was quite elaborate, made of graduated beads of shaded blues. Jocelyn's was all pink, while mine was blue and white.

We had laid them on lids of cardboard boxes to dry, and were gazing at them proudly in the living-room again when Abigail's mother arrived home from the theatre. Oh, she was beautiful! I had

never seen her before, and I was simply dazzled. She honestly didn't look more than nineteen, and was just like a princess in a fairy-story, with golden hair that must have been yards long, and blue eyes and rosy cheeks. Abigail's mother!

They kissed each other as if they had been separated a month, and Mrs. Sims spoke very kindly to Jocelyn and me; then, when she saw the beads, her eyes sparkled in the prettiest way. You could see she just loved fanciness and frills. Abigail explained how she had got the directions over the radio.

"How clever of you, darling!" said Mrs. Sims, really awestruck. "You know, girls, I never could possibly think of such things. And Abigail doesn't care for ornaments at all, the way most girls do, yet, when she wants to, she can make them so nicely!"

"*Brains!*" said Jocelyn.

"That's it," said Mrs. Sims seriously.

"Stuff!" said Abigail to Jocelyn.

"I think you knew I'd like it, Abigail," said Mrs. Sims, just like a sweet child.

"Well, don't you?" Abigail rebuked her. But she patted her, too!

Then Doctor Sims came in from his round of calls, and, while he was extremely nice, I think Jocelyn and I got another shock when we realized he was Abigail's father, the more so because he was dark, like her, and keen-looking, though not so much so as she was. But he had the most beautiful, smooth manners, and spoke very gently and politely. He would make you feel well at once if you even looked at him when you were sick, and he was just the kind of person you would want to invite to a party, to help make it go off. Now Abigail, while indeed a stimulating companion, gave you one jolt after another. You never knew what she was going to do next, except that it would be something admirable but perhaps discouraging to those less gifted with observation and judgment.

But Abigail and her father were plainly most congenial. He admired the necklaces greatly, and evidently considered her very

ingenious, and was much pleased when Jocelyn said she thought Abigail's necklace was the most artistic because the shaded blues matched her eyes as they appeared in different lights. This was quite true, though Abigail convincingly denied following any such deliberately vain plan in designing the beads.

"What did they call the beads when they gave you the directions, darling?" asked her mother. "They're so pretty, they ought to have a nice name."

"Cornmeal-and-salt beads, they called them," answered Abigail, just to tease, for really they hadn't called them even that. They had simply announced: "Directions for making a novelty necklace."

Mrs. Sims looked quite shocked. The doctor laughed. Then suddenly an idea came to me. It was nearly time to go, and Abigail had certainly been very nice to Jocelyn and me. We were dry and well-fed, we had necklaces, we had had a most thought-provoking conversation, and, now

that the rain was slackening, we should have a chance to get home between showers. "I know a name for them!" I cried on the spur of the minute. "At least, I think so. Oh, have you an encyclopedia? Could I have the *DRA* volume a second, just to make sure of something?"

Doctor Sims instantly produced the volume from among his learned books, and in a twinkling I had "*Dragon,*" and found that the recollection which had popped into my brain out of some deep-sunken story, no doubt, which I had heard maybe years ago, was correct.

"Now, listen!" said I. "I propose that we name the beads in honor of—of Abigail's —*necklace!*" I looked at her hard and mysteriously. "I'll tell you why, first. Then I'll tell you the name. And don't interrupt me until I've finished, Abigail!"

"Excellent advice, that!" laughed her father.

"It's a big compliment," I added, "and you don't need to return it this time."

"All right, I won't interrupt," promised Abigail.

"'The word "*dragon*" means *sharp-sighted,*'" I read from the encyclopedia. "'There were believed to be in ancient times keen-eyed beings of striking form who were called by this name, who were able to observe the deep secrets of earth and explain them in parables to mankind, to whom these beings are shown, in many mythologies, to have been beneficently inclined.'"

I looked up at Abigail. If the corners of her mouth hadn't been just slightly lifted, she would have looked more like a sphinx than ever. "That explains why we can name the beads in honor of your—necklace," said I, "and the name that I suggest for them is 'Dragon's Eyes!'"

And even Abigail was pleased to death!

CHAPTER XV

JOCELYN COMES INTO HER OWN

We had to scurry home and had little chance to talk, but the next morning, just as I was stepping to the telephone to call Jocelyn and ask her to wait for me, so I could stop for her on my way to school, for I wanted to talk, the bell rang, and it was herself, asking me to wait for her so she could stop. So within five minutes we were walking up the Ridge together.

"We'll have an exciting meeting this afternoon," she predicted.

"I'll not disagree with you there," I returned. "I guess we'll have an exciting morning, too, if everybody is as mad as they all were yesterday."

"You can't stay as mad as that," said Jocelyn. "I'm not nearly so mad as I was, are you, Vi?"

"Not so red-hot mad," I explained.

"But I feel chilly-mad, and awfully bad, and rather guilty, and I wish somebody would tell me what to do."

"I've been feeling like that, too. Well, we're no different from other people, so I guess that must be the way the whole school is feeling. But oh, Viola, I've been thinking so hard, for days and days and days, and especially since yesterday afternoon."

"Abigail certainly said a lot of true things, even if she is very young, and only in the first year."

"She has dragon's eyes!" said Jocelyn mischievously. "I saw what you meant when you named the beads, Viola. Abigail's awfully keen, and really very kind and friendly, too."

"The one thing I don't like about her," said I, "is that she's so dreadfully aggressive."

"She knows that," said Jocelyn gently. "She tried to check it yesterday, too. It's her nature to be sure of herself, she's so bright."

"Yes, she's really intellectual—something like her father, in mind, but not in disposition, and not a bit like her mother. Wasn't her mother lovely!"

"Absolutely! And how fond those three very different people are of each other!" Jocelyn smiled and shook her head thoughtfully.

"Honestly," said I confidentially, "I wondered how they got along so splendidly."

"I think," said Jocelyn very earnestly, "it's because they all love a thing in common, and that's their home. Don't you remember how Abigail said so naturally, 'The life we live together—isn't that everybody's business?' She knows how to harmonize with people entirely different from herself, and I believe, Viola, that that's how she was able to put her finger right on the weak spot of our school life."

"What is it?" I asked, quite amazed at Jocelyn's reflective tone.

"We're all out of tune," she said quietly. "We can't strike together and make har-

mony. We're all off the pitch, and we jangle horribly."

I simply stared at her. It wasn't a bit like Jocelyn to speak figuratively, though of course I realized at once that her mind was harking back to our visit to the old belfry, when we learned about the principles of harmony in chimes. But she didn't notice me at all, and didn't observe my surprise. She went right on talking.

"You know, there isn't any reason in the whole wide world why we can't be harmonious. No; there are, in fact, two perfectly good reasons why we can!"

"What are they?" I inquired politely. I couldn't think of any.

"The first is, that it's in us to be harmonious if we wish! Don't you remember the fortune-book? Of course each of us liked to believe that his or her fortune was terribly personal, but, really, all of them urged us to do the same thing to succeed, that is, to develop our best qualities unselfishly, and to try to strengthen our poorer

ones. If we all did that, we'd never jangle! And the second reason is—we've *been* harmonious! Yes, this year! I tell you we have, at least in a small way, Viola. Have you forgotten what happened when enough people finally got together and put the singing-school through? Why, such an assembly program was never heard of before! Now, why can't we do something like that again?"

I didn't say another word. Jocelyn seemed almost inspired, to me. I felt that she was getting all ready to do something wonderful, but what it was, I had no idea. But there was something about her that made me want to trust her with whatever might be decided about the disaster which would be discussed at our meeting that afternoon. And all through that day, which seemed very long, for a cold, sulky, revengeful sort of feeling hung over the school, I comforted myself with the belief that Jocelyn might be able to show us a way out of our difficulties. And it wasn't only faith,

either, for she suggested, and I agreed with her, that the first thing we two ought to do was to see Mr. Hastings about that Latin prose paper we had so naughtily filched from his desk. So we went to him, and, humiliating as it was to do so, we explained every detail to him, and told him how different taking it for the sake of friendship had at first made the deed appear. All he said was that he was much surprised, and sincerely trusted that we would never do such a thing again, and we said we trusted the same, and we certainly never would.

Then personally we felt much better, but we couldn't see that the temper of the school improved much all day, and at the hour of the meeting we gathered with a noise like a buzz-saw and a rumble of thunder in the distance. John Parker had to preside, for Archer did not attend the meeting, as Mr. Lane would not let him, telling him that he had forfeited public confidence.

Poor John! He wasn't very bright or quick naturally, but he had hitherto been

rather popular because he was extremely good-natured. But having been a regular member of the leading set didn't increase his popularity at that meeting, though we all knew he at least had not been involved in the accident to the painting, which had started all the trouble, since he was being coached late every afternoon to take college-entrance examinations in February. He was conscientious but scared, and hadn't an idea in the world what to do with such a turbulent throng as that which faced him. Also, there was a most embarrassing financial problem to be discussed, namely, the best way to secure instantly, before Christmas, and with a treasury like a vacuum to fall back on, one hundred and fifty dollars.

At least nobody suggested getting up some merry entertainment, but some one of course proposed having a tax, as had been thought of when the bell was first suggested as a gift.

" How much apiece would we have to con-

tribute to raise a tax of one hundred and fifty dollars?" asked some one.

Poor John was obliged to reply, "Sixty cents!"

There was a loud groan, and then a howl of derision. Nobody could get the floor, for from all over the room came objections that such a sum was excessive, and nobody would pay it if levied. Finally some one suggested paying a smaller tax and raising the balance of the hundred and fifty dollars some other way, but we were now all irrevocably opposed to taxation in any form! Then discussion began to wander, and questions were hurled at John. The meeting wanted information. Why had the gift committee delayed action so long on the gift and then finally got us into such trouble over it? Poor John! He was on the committee, and yet not responsible at all for the trouble, though unwilling to say anything that would involve his friends who were concerned, even though unofficially, as far as the committee went. People wanted to know why the

order had been put through illegally, why it had been assumed that the cost would be comparatively small, and why, when they themselves had had no part in the disaster, they should be called on to repair it.

John was very patient, and tried his best to satisfy all questioners, but the truth was the meeting was in a temper where it was determined not to be satisfied. After a while he did succeed in bringing us around again to the purpose of the meeting, namely, to decide what concrete action we should take to raise the money for the bell, but there apparently wasn't one idea among two hundred and fifty minds. The audience got very restless, and finally some one suggested that we should put the matter into the hands of a committee.

"No more committees! We've had enough of committees!" came from all over the room; and there we were, back again where we had started! It certainly was most discouraging.

Then Wilbur Edson, who had said noth-

ing at all so far, got up and addressed the chair formally, and got the floor at once. Everybody respected Wilbur and was ready to listen to him, and he doubtless knew that, for he spoke very clearly and carefully. He said:

"Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that we all are acting in a cowardly way in the face of an emergency. We are doing nothing whatever to meet it bravely. We're all involved in it, and we ought to get together to settle it, no matter what has happened, for it is all over now. We haven't done one thing since Mr. Lane's announcement yesterday morning except try to get even in some way with the person or persons responsible for our troubles, and we're so dumb that we haven't even succeeded in doing that. For the love of Pete, do let us try to think of something constructive to do to raise this money. We're all perfectly sick of this mess, and the sooner it's done with the sooner we can go ahead to something better, which I am sure is the real

desire of every loyal member of our community."

Wilbur's earnestness and good sense had a lot of effect. He was rather editorial in spots, too, which gave weight to his remarks. When he sat down there was a very agreeable silence over the meeting, as if many present felt they would do well to put a check on their emotions. There were also some thoughtful puckers on brows. I think by that time many would have been glad to make some practical suggestion had they been able to think of one, but unquestionably the problem was very difficult.

But Frances Walton spoke up and said that whatever activity we undertook ought to include everybody, so we could all contribute something to the cause, because, after all, it was our present to the new school, and we took an interest in it, and wanted it to be as successful as possible. And she said this in a very quiet and humble but sincere way which made a deep impression, for hitherto Frances and her friends cer-

tainly never had cared much who was interested in anything, or whether or not it was successful, either, unless they were directly interested, and she was not the leader in that set, but one of the followers. And then Larry Hill, the treasurer, got up and said that Mr. Lane had spoken to him personally, and said that if any really practical scheme to raise the fund could be devised by the students, he would back it heartily, and would much prefer it to any plan of his own which he would have to direct us in carrying out. And finally Abigail got the floor and said briefly, and for once without sharpness:

"We ought to remember, too, that this money doesn't all need to be in hand until New Year's. We have several weeks in which to raise it."

"Those are all helpful points," remarked John, with evident relief that a much better spirit was beginning to prevail in the meeting. "Now, where is some concrete plan?"

"Here!" cried Jocelyn confidently, springing to her feet.

She had not spoken since we came into the meeting. Yet instinctively everybody present turned to her as a leader, for that was what she had become! At that moment, in that emergency, after days and days of difficulty and meditation and taking council with herself, Jocelyn's natural gift of leadership burst into flower—I saw it myself! But she didn't know it at all. She was entirely without self-consciousness, though at that moment she looked almost inspired. Breezy and courageous she always was, and now she was also intelligent, calm, and fearless.

"I know how to undo this tangle we're all in!" she declared in that same confident tone. "We must all work—*work!*—together to unsnarl it. Do you remember what all the trades did last year when we were rebuilding Daskam Hospital? Each man did a day's work and gave a day's pay toward the new walls. I move that we

each take a leaf from this experience, and find a piece of work to do some Saturday soon, and contribute what we get for it to buy our beautiful bell—for it's just as beautiful as ever, isn't it, that bell which will make our chimes play 'The Star-Spangled Banner'? And I know that if we can do this we'll not only buy our bell—we'll rebuild the broken walls of our happiness!"

She sat down in a riot of applause. I don't believe the rest of us realized what we were doing any more than she had been conscious of the hope she had brought us, for she had made just the right appeal. The whole school still wanted the bell for its gift, and saw now that the one way to happiness for us was a common loyalty to our common good. We were more than glad to work for the bell when we saw that our united effort could bring back our old harmony. We clapped and cheered and stamped and shrieked with relief and delight, and as the noise finally began to die

down, Rand Potter stood up on a chair and shouted:

"We'll be Saturday's children and work for our giving!"

And forthwith this was adopted as our slogan! And within ten minutes Mr. Lane had designated Saturday week as the great day!

CHAPTER XVI

RED-LETTER SATURDAY

So forthwith ensued a wild but inspiring scramble to secure paying occupations for Saturday. Of course we saw that probably few of us could work all day, but it was agreed that all pieces of work secured for that red-letter day were to be equally honored, and so were all payments of whatever size. The point was that each of us was doing his or her best in a common cause. We also agreed not to take any work away from regular workers, or to take pay for anything we usually did at home. And then, despite these restrictions and the short notice and the merry tendency of our teachers to tease us mildly about the delightful novelty of seeing students working, we set about placing ourselves with considerable ingenuity, if I do say so.

The younger students mostly preferred to

work at home, so lots of them got permission to do all the odd jobs which are usually left either until spring house-cleaning or for the odd-job man if he ever proves willing to oblige. Dozens and dozens of chairs and tables must have been mended and polished, and innumerable gates painted, and trunks repaired, by able amateurs in Daskam that day. The older boys found many exciting occupations, such as Wilbur's, for instance. Seeing a sign on the city museum, " Strong Boy Wanted to Polish Floors," he offered his services, and, being heavy and rhythmical rather than swift in his motions, he did quite a brilliant job, and not only earned two dollars, but was invited to return regularly every Saturday! Rand delivered orders for a butcher all day, and also collected material for a most thrilling exposition for English class, which described what all the kitchens in Daskam looked like; and John Parker ushered at a special matinée, where his conscientious courtesy stood him in good stead. A lot of the older girls helped with extra

work in various homes, for many people, learning of our enterprise, begged for the services of those who could do a family mending or amuse children, and such things many girls did gladly and well. Others with special gifts used them. One girl made and sold lovely hat-pins and pendants of sealing-wax, another designed place-cards for a luncheon, and Doris Hart, who had been far down in the dumps for days over her poor record, found great encouragement in an opportunity Mr. Lane himself got for her. His cousin owned the prettiest candy-store in Daskam, called by just the right name for it, "Fairyland," and he asked for several extra girls to help handle his regular Saturday-afternoon rush. So Doris was one of those who responded, and her politeness and charm attracted custom and made her a great success there. And I cannot conclude this catalogue of our achievements without adding those of Archer and of Abigail.

Archer, naturally humiliated by the re-

sults of his administration of school affairs, had had to resign from the office of president. He became quite unpopular, to tell the truth, for the episode of the order for the bell was held generally to be quite unpardonable. Nobody knew, you see, what Jocelyn and I couldn't tell, how he had primarily sent in that order on an impulse to shield Doris. This showed that he had some good instinct, however misdirected it had been. So when everybody else was joyfully scrambling for a job, he hadn't spirit enough left to dare ask for anything. But Jocelyn privately got her father, who owns a wholesale grocery, to hire Archer to drive the extra truck Saturday's many orders usually require. He was a skillful and experienced chauffeur and was pathetically delighted to be wanted to do anything at all. And " that there new green boy," as he was called from morn to dewy eve that day in and out of Mr. Gay's shipping-office, certainly had to " step lively " and " watch his step " and load and deliver exactly as per

schedule and no other way! If Archer needed any further convincing on the desirability of following rules, I think he must have got it before the head shipping-clerk had finished with him.

But though perhaps his work was a new experience for him, our steadfast little Abigail merely demonstrated, as customary with her, the triumph of mind over matter. She took cold, and her father wouldn't let her work as she had intended to, caddying at a golf tournament at the country club. But nothing daunted, she explored his waiting-room, where patients often left newspapers, and she found one of these which had a weekly puzzle column with money prizes for original contributions. Being original presented no difficulties to Abigail, with a cold or without one. She forthwith invented the most astonishing cross-word puzzle you ever heard of, and entered it in the competition. It was the sort that baffles you completely and yet won't let go of you. You *have* to work it

out. As yet I have not succeeded in solving it, or I would put it in here, but even if I never get it I know I shall go on trying! So you won't be surprised to learn that she won first prize, which was three dollars, and the largest contribution made toward the bell.

As for Jocelyn and myself, we were still undecided as to what work we would undertake, and, in fact, were debating the question at my house one evening, when the telephone rang. It turned out to be a message from Mr. Macklyn, Archer's father, for me. He is quite a friend of my father's, you see, and he knew that Jocelyn and I would probably like to work together if we could. So he offered us posts as "water-girls" in his hotel dining-room during the serving of luncheon that very Saturday! It promised to be work that would compare favorably with anybody's as far as adventure and excitement and novelty went, for the Macklyn House is a charming hotel at any time, but on this special Saturday, it seemed, a one-

day conference of all the social workers in our county was to be held there. The members of the conference were to meet both in the morning and in the afternoon, and have luncheon together. So, Mr. Macklyn said, there would be several extra tables in the dining-room, and he would have to get extra help at noon. We accepted his most thoughtful offer with delight, for not only would it be very thrilling to see all the members of the conference, but we had known several older girls who had made part of their college expenses working in various ways at the Macklyn House, and they all had liked it ever so much.

We were to go on duty at half-past eleven and finish at two, and to receive a dollar apiece for our work. So eleven o'clock found us putting on the water-girl's uniform, blue-and-yellow plaid gingham with blue-and-yellow ribbons at the neck, and a bibbed apron, as pretty as anything you ever saw. Then we went into the handsome dining-room, with its rich blue walls and

great plate-glass windows, and dazzling linen and glittering silver and glass, and one of the regular water-girls kindly showed us our duties. Each of us had a section of tables. When guests sat down we were to take their glasses and fill them at a silver faucet at one side of the room and then carry them back, together with one of the pats of butter which were in a great bowl on a table close by, with butter-plates, trays, and wicker tumbler-carriers, to use if we had to serve several people at once. "And whatever you do, don't ever hurry!" concluded our instructress impressively, and I grinned at Jocelyn, but next second the laugh was turned on me, for the other water-girl added: "And don't think about yourselves. Keep watching the other people, so you can refill their glasses." Then, with the other girls, we lined up in front of our silver faucet, which was our station when not actively engaged, and the doors were opened.

I dare say the social workers had trans-

acted a great deal of business that morning, and it had made them very hungry, for they all came in to luncheon promptly, so almost immediately we water-girls found ourselves extremely busy. Very soon there was a large crowd in the dining-room, increased by regular guests and business people coming in to luncheon, and it was quite a revelation how much water they all drank. I am sure I walked miles and miles in two hours and a half. A great many people would even pick up the glass the minute I set it down, and have it drunk dry before I got back to my post! However, we enjoyed ourselves greatly after the first slight nervousness wore off, and were both very proud to think we were doing some real worth-while work and earning regular pay to give toward our bell.

Mr. Macklyn came in personally to see if his guests were being properly attended to, and he spoke to Jocelyn and me very kindly, and told us quietly who some of the workers were, and as a number of them were quite

famous, like a woman doctor who had quite lately saved many orphans in the Near East, and a Red Cross man who had won the Distinguished Service Cross in France, that made our work more interesting than ever, and it gave us great pleasure to serve these splendid people, too.

About one o'clock, when we were both free for a moment and standing at our post not far from the door, a tall young girl came into the dining-room, and as she was alone and wore no hat it was evident that she was living in the hotel. She went straight to a small table in Jocelyn's section, and Jocelyn, going over with her glass of water, was detained there a moment because the girl spoke to her and asked her if she was one of the high-school students working that day to buy their gift. But as soon as she had spoken they both smiled, because she was the same girl, Jocelyn told me when she returned, that had sat in front of her during our singing-school that we gave at the Friday assembly. She was

much thrilled to learn that we were giving a bell, and said she hoped she would hear it ring before she left Daskam. And Jocelyn told her we were to have it by New Year's, and then had to go on with her work. Jocelyn said she was a very sweet girl.

I suppose we had worked half an hour longer, feeling sure that our job was certainly as good as any undertaken by any Daskam student that day, when the event occurred which, in our estimation, at least, made it superior to all of them.

A bell-boy came into the dining-room and started to page some one. We were both busy, not far away from each other, on the opposite side of the room from that down which the boy had started, so at first we could not hear him distinctly and paid no attention. But gradually he came nearer, and at last we heard him calling clearly:

"Miss Hope Seaborne! Miss Hope Seaborne!"

In my hand was one of the tumbler-carriers with six full glasses on it, and I

just managed not to drop them all on the floor. I am afraid I did glance at Jocelyn. She kept right on distributing butter in correct deliberate style, but her glance crossed mine. The boy had come to a stop at the little table in her section, and I heard him say, "Telephone." The next instant the tall young girl was preceding him out of the dining-room!

So she was Hope Seaborne of "Your Birthday Fortune" and the scarlet-cardboard rebus book-mark!

Jocelyn and I could hardly do our work, waiting breathlessly for her return. But she didn't come back.

We began to think nobody was ever going to finish eating. Our one hope was that we might be able to see her again and have a chance to tell her about her book and book-mark. We waited in vain. And then, about fifteen minutes after she had left the room, she suddenly flashed like a streak of lightning past the desk outside, in her outdoor things, carrying a black leather

case. She bounded out of the front door and disappeared!

We had found her—and lost her. It seemed worse than not finding her at all!

CHAPTER XVII

WE NAME OUR BELL

"JOCELYN," said I with sad conviction, as we quitted the Macklyn House ourselves a little late, our dollar bills safe in our purses, "I believe we must be fated never to get into touch with Hope Seaborne!"

"Pshaw, I don't believe in fate!" denied Jocelyn stoutly, though at least as disappointed as I was. "What I believe in, Viola, is fortune; that is, I believe in the kind of fortune that Hope's book predicts for you. I mean, it was predicted for all of us that if we used our brains and ability as best we could, we'd all win some kind of success. And you see that at least you and I have finally succeeded in finding Hope, though we never could exactly have expected to. And she actually spoke to me."

I was obliged to admit that this was true.

"And," continued Jocelyn, "I told you

she said she hoped to hear the bell ring before she left Daskam, and I don't believe she has left it permanently now, for, Viola, she dashed out with just one small bag. She must be here with some one, of course. I believe she just got an invitation by telephone to go somewhere, and that she'll be back again, and we'll have a chance to give her her book and book-mark yet."

I was never as optimistic as Jocelyn, but she seemed so sure of herself that I didn't want to throw cold water on her happy beliefs.

"I certainly hope you're right," I said, "and I think you have underestimated one thing, anyway. I'm sure we, not just you and I, but all of us, have succeeded in doing more than finding Hope. I think if each and all of us have done our best, we have raised enough money to buy the bell without another minute of worry over it."

That proved, on Monday, to be exactly what had taken place. On arriving at school each student received a small blue

envelope, in which the money he or she had received for work done on Saturday was to be placed and sealed up. All during recess a merry procession wended its way into the school-office to drop the envelopes into a large box. And that afternoon, when they were torn open and the money counted, it was found that our united efforts at home and abroad had netted the dazzling sum of one hundred and eighty dollars! Nobody could believe it at first.

So our bell was safe. There was no doubt that we should have it to present at New Year's, and we were all tremendously glad and proud of that, and equally proud because we felt we had accomplished a great deal of useful, constructive work. We felt we had done something really valuable for our homes and for the industry of Daskam, and I believe others thought so, too, for many and many were the grown-ups who bestowed on us admiring congratulations both for our achievement and for our original way of raising funds without doing

any preliminary work or going to expense in the first place.

But Jocelyn's sound scheme had still another result besides guaranteeing the bell. From that day when we all worked together so hard for a common purpose, the spirit of the school began to change for the better. That was very evident. The first thing you noticed was that people stopped knocking, not only because they didn't seem to have time for it any more, but because it was plain that the boys and girls who had made a failure of their leadership regretted it. They showed their regret by working perhaps harder than any one else that Saturday, and, from that time on, by behaving like other people, not trying to run everything and not showing themselves superior to the rules we all were expected to obey. So we couldn't knock them any more! Then the second change in the spirit of the school was that, having once got together, we seemed to stay together. I never remember such a week of peace as that fol-

lowing our red-letter Saturday, when we knew the bell was safe, with our hundred and eighty dollars in the bank, and thirty of this actually a reserve fund, where before there had been nothing but a mournful hole in the treasury. I think the first mark of our unity was that everybody started to study very industriously to pass the mid-term examinations in early December with as much credit as possible. Somehow we all felt more responsible than usual for our school work now. And the school came through those examinations with a rate of averages which caused the teachers to smile on us with the most dazed gratification, perhaps feeling that they shared in the credit! And maybe they did. Anyway, the marks they gave us put several athletic stars back on teams, and we all attended practice with renewed enthusiasm. The various class teams gave new impetus to class spirit by their creditable playing, and there was talk of arranging an interclass hockey tournament after Christmas, which would certainly

be the first school event within the memory of man that was anything like old times—or so it seemed, anyhow. In short, we started again on the highway to happiness which we had formerly travelled without appreciating its smoothness.

Yet, although nobody said so, nothing seemed precisely the same as before. We had suffered a great deal, though at the same time we had learned a great deal; and we had come through triumphantly together and in the knowledge that we were stronger than before for having conquered a bad situation in our little community. I think we all really felt as if some touch was needed to set a seal on our harmonious reunion. Well, that climax came, but so naturally that at the time we didn't realize at all that it was a climax.

One day a lot of us were eating our luncheon together in our cozy old lunch-room, and the great piece of news of the morning was being discussed. It had just been announced.

"When, when?" cried Abigail, making herself at home at the table where Jocelyn and I and several other "prominent persons," as Wilbur would doubtless have called them had he been reporting the gathering for the *Green-and-White,* were assuaging the pangs of hunger. "And what did you call it, 'Inspection Day?'"

She demanded the information of no less a person than John Parker, now G. O. president, and with due humility he responded, "Yes, Inspection Day, and it's to be on New Year's morning for us, and all day for important people."

"Such," inquired Abigail, "as who?"

"The mayor, for example," said John. "The Board of Education is going to tender him and other city officials and our faculty a luncheon in the new building, to celebrate its completion. But students will be allowed to come and inspect it all morning before twelve o'clock."

"I'm coming," Abigail assured the com-

pany, as if to set many anxious doubts at rest.

"I guess nobody will stay away," said I, "especially if we can see the new bell. And if they let us inspect the whole building, we'll surely be allowed up in the bell-tower where it will be, no doubt."

"It surely will," nodded Jocelyn, "for yesterday I met that old workman whom Viola and I talked to that day we were up in the belfry. He was out here in the street, and remembered me, and stopped to speak. He said they surely would have all the chimes in place and ready to ring at New Year's, though it had been a long job. He said 'Loyalty' in particular was so heavy that it needed a lot of time and care to move."

There were many puzzled stares at Jocelyn as she spoke the last sentence, and Rand asked:

"Jocelyn, will you please issue an edition with notes of that statement?"

"No, I'll translate it into English," she

answered; "I guess it's my fault you don't understand it. I don't believe I've ever mentioned that the biggest bell among the chimes is named 'Loyalty.' The name is engraved on it."

"And are the others named, too?" asked Doris, quite interested, as was everybody else.

"No, that's the only name among them."

"I believe they named just the largest to express the spirit that the whole set of memorial chimes commemorates," I suggested.

"No doubt that's it," agreed several others.

"It's too bad we didn't know enough to name ours. That would have been a nice thing to do," remarked Abigail, looking at Jocelyn and me severely. I said regretfully:

"It's too bad we were so forgetful. I wish we could name it yet."

"Let's!" cried Doris.

Everybody turned to her with enthusiasm,

for her charm had always commanded attention, and lately there had been about her a sort of reposeful sweetness that was ever so attractive. And plainly she had a plan.

"Do you know," she said slowly, "I think it may be a good thing after all that we didn't know until just now that bells could be named. I don't believe it's too late in the day to order ours named, if the name is only to be engraved, and wouldn't that be a splendid way to use our thirty extra dollars that we never expected to have? But, after all, the real point is that we didn't know until now what would be a good name for a bell that completes a set of chimes called 'Loyalty.'"

Her voice thrilled! It was so plain to her just what that bell ought to be called that the rest of us, who didn't quite see it yet, waited in silence for her to finish her speech.

"That bell will ring out the word 'free,' the highest note of the national anthem," she said softly. "So why don't we name it

what we've all just learned together must crown loyalty to the common good ——"

She paused. We all knew now what she meant, but we wanted her to say the word for us, and she did.

" The name I mean," she said, " is ' Freedom '! "

Well, that bell was named by acclamation! And oh, that glorious New Year's Day when " Freedom " rang! Never in all the world could any one have dreamed the half of what happened that day.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE DEDICATION

For you know, of course, how it is when one person gets a brilliant idea; every one who hears it feels stimulated, and lots of people suddenly develop bright ideas themselves, and the original one grows and grows like a snowball! And that was what happened when we had decided to name our bell.

When Mr. Lane heard the name, he said it was excellent and inspiring, and asked us if we wouldn't like to have a formal presentation of the bell to the new building. Wouldn't we! We were just enchanted at the idea, all of us, so he said we could have it on New Year's morning, and the gift committee could arrange the program and decide on who should present the bell.

So we had a meeting, and, to my great delight and that of everybody else, too, it

was decided that Jocelyn must make the presentation speech! She was simply overwhelmed; in fact, she almost hung back for a little, which was quite unlike her, and due only to her appreciation of the greatness of the occasion. But we all felt that the leader who had guided us to victory and won us the bell, indeed, ought to present it for us. Mr. Lane told her to write a very short speech, saying in her own words just what she thought the school felt in giving the bell, and to let him see it, but keep it a secret from everybody else. So she did this, while the rest of the gift committee arranged a suitable program.

We took a great deal of trouble over it. We conferred carefully with our librarian to find interesting things to do for the occasion, for some one told us that for hundreds of years bells have been presented with great ceremony, whether church-bells or bells of a city or famous building, and, as this was an important bell for our school, we wanted to present it, if possible, in

some fitting traditional manner. At length we arranged a beautiful ceremony, wherein we planned to depict little historic customs which seemed appropriate in connection with the dedication of a school-bell, and the prospect of performing it added to our happy anticipations for the first of January.

At last New Year's arrived, a perfect mid-winter day. At Daskam that means the air is mild, and still—still! Early there is fair gray sky very far above the black branches, revealing the most distant horizon sharply, then slowly it turns to pale blue, and down through the whole arch filters golden sunlight all the rest of the day. It was just the day for our festival, for so the inspection of our new school-home seemed to us, who had waited for it so long and so longingly.

Directly after breakfast I proudly donned for the first time the pretty new gray coat my parents had given me for Christmas, buttoned it up smartly over my favorite green frock—it was still a favorite at the

end of three whole months!—and danced down to our gate to meet Jocelyn, who was waiting for me there in the sunlight. I was terribly excited, though she wasn't. She was quiet and bright and sweet, like the day.

But both of us got a thrill a few minutes later, as we mounted the steps and entered the splendid red-and-white colonial building now ready to receive us permanently the very next day, when the holidays ended. It seemed almost as if we had never seen it before, we were so dazed to realize that at last it was ours, that glorious school. But we rallied and made a quick recovery from the shock!

First we found our own new spick-and-span classroom on the third floor, then we visited the shops, the laboratories, the library, studios, gymnasium, and every other crack and cranny inside the four walls, and you couldn't have convinced us that everything we saw wasn't perfect. We found crowds of our friends everywhere we went, and then, of course, as soon as we grew

familiar with the building we rushed back to the entrances to seize newcomers to escort around and show things off to. There were plenty of them, all students at that early hour. I made several tours as escort, and on one of them passed Rand and Wilbur, overzealously early in charge of the guests' checking-room.

"Come on, give us something to check!" urged Wilbur, trying to drum up trade. "Viola, everybody's seen that new coat now. You'll get a heat-stroke if you keep it on any longer."

Between excitement and racing up and down stairs I was indeed nearly melted, even to my pride. I let him take the coat.

"Heard the news?" he asked affably, presenting me with my check.

"Nothing special," I answered.

"Our unique position of influence always keeps us posted, you know," Rand informed me aside, while he gave Wilbur an approving poke. "And 'tis well, 'tis well, on account of getting out our special edition of

the *Green-and-White* for to-day. We must needs fill it up somehow."

The special edition, I should say, was another idea due to the naming of the bell and the attendant ceremony. The editorial board was celebrating the presentation of the gift by bringing out the January copy of the *Green-and-White* that day instead of the next Friday, with four extra pages about the latest school happenings.

"No trouble to me to write any amount of junk any time," announced Wilbur, shoving Rand aside in a dignified manner. "The news I was going to tell you, Viola, is so new that it's not even coming out in the paper. We're going to have a concert on the chimes this morning."

"That certainly is news!" I cried. "I thought we were going to hear them first the first day of school."

"We were, but as long as they are reported completely in order a little ahead of schedule, we're to have a concert to-day."

"That'll be the climax!" I declared,

perfectly delighted at the thought of hearing the bells ringing again.

"Snappy New Year, eh?" cried Rand.

Wilbur offered to print that joke in the next *Green-and-White* if Rand would buy space for it! I tore off to spread the news. After looking all over for Jocelyn, and dropping the glad tidings everywhere as I went, to the great satisfaction of everybody, I finally discovered her talking to Doris at the head of the fourth-floor side-staircase. This was where all the students were shortly to assemble, to go up to the belfry for the presentation. Doris was evidently making the final arrangements.

"You'll surely be right here in ten minutes, when the signal sounds, won't you, Jocelyn?" I heard her say, as I came panting up. "You have to go at the head of the procession so as to be in front, you know."

But almost before Jocelyn could promise, and certainly before I could get my breath to make my wonderful announcement, out

from a near-by classroom popped Abigail with several of her devoted first-year followers.

"Oh, are you there, Jocelyn?" she cried. "I just heard your voice and Doris's. I wanted to see you specially this morning. What are you going to say in your speech?"

Jocelyn smiled and shook her head wisely. "It's not really a speech at all," she said. "Wait and see!"

"All right," agreed Abigail amiably. "That wasn't really what I had to say to you, anyhow. I've been telling the girls how my fortune has come true,—you know, the birthday fortune you read me at the party,—and I wanted you to know, too." She was fumbling in a pocket while talking as fast as she could chatter. "I copied it when you read it, and decided then never to tell many people about it because it sounded so improbable. But it has come true, so it's good to tell now, especially because it has a sort of New Year's forecast, too. That's why I brought it—here it is!"

She finally produced a slip of paper, and read to us, as all her admirers stood breathless around her:

"'Perplexing problems will fall to your lot ——'"

"Puzzles, of course," kindly explained one of the admirers to Jocelyn and Doris and me, as we had not been present at the previous interpretation of the fortune.

"'But if you use your mind to work out such difficulties in private counsel, you will find them at last triumphs won ——'"

"Prizes, you see," pointed out the commentator.

"'And each succeeding year will bring you clearer vision and warmer charity,'" concluded Abigail, and as she raised her eyes they rested thoughtfully for just a second on Doris. "The prediction part is what I like," she observed, "because it means I'll be nicer all the time!"

We didn't often laugh at Abigail, but this time we had to, it was so unlike her to be whimsical. Even Doris, who never

had had very much use for her, naturally, laughed, too, and then her laugh became a really appreciative smile. But despite Abigail's interesting and original remarks, I couldn't hold in my news one second longer, now that I had breath to utter it. I broke out in excitement which delay had only increased:

"Girls! There's going to be a concert on the chimes this morning! I've just heard!"

"Hurray, hurray!" cried everybody. "When, when?"

Well, I had been so excited I had forgotten to ask what time! So all our young first-year friends instantly bolted downstairs to make inquiries, and Doris dashed up to the roof to see if all her arrangements were in working order. Jocelyn and I exchanged a glance and went into the near-by classroom to sit down until it should be time to form in procession. Perhaps it was unusual for us to sit down and rest, but we had had a pretty full morning and

there was still much of it remaining ahead of us.

"Well, if that wasn't the crowning touch —Abigail offering to smoke the peace-pipe on New Year's morning!" murmured Jocelyn, stifling a laugh. "And Doris taking her up!"

"And she used our presence there to make it easy for all concerned," I pointed out. "And her birthday fortune came in most usefully, didn't it? I don't know how I ever kept sober. Puzzles—prizes—indeed! I could make a very different interpretation of that fortune, and so could you. Do you suppose she could know Doris told us about—about the *sniffs?*"

"I almost wondered. You were always so friendly with Doris, you know, Viola. But what interpretation do you make of Abigail's extraordinary conduct and remarks?"

"If I tell you," said I, "remember, I can never prove it's true, for Abigail is always a Sphinx girl. But, though not so

bright at puzzles as some, I have had for some time a theory as to how she came to know about the smudge."

"I never could make that out at all."

I drew Jocelyn over to a window which gave a view up and across the street. "You remember," said I, "that Abigail's family had just moved into one of those new bungalows? You remember, too, that the big window in her living-room commands a wide view, including, among other things, the front door of this building? I *think* she saw Doris and Archer and their crowd coming in here that afternoon, and very likely saw them skylarking around the main hall near that painting, through one of those big windows that flank the door. I think her 'fortune' made a great impression on her, made her decide to 'use her mind' to do something about the disgrace of that smudge. Hence the sniffs, and—I don't know, of course, but isn't it possible that when we were all talking so endlessly about the accident, she conveyed to Wilbur that

she knew how it had happened? Of course she never mentioned names any more than he asked for them, but such was his confidence in her character, I believe, that he forthwith conceived and wrote his famous editorial in a desperate effort to bolster up the school spirit."

"Mazes untangled while you wait!" teased Jocelyn. "Even if you can't prove your theories, Viola, they strike me as sound. Abigail's not the only keen observer we have in these parts, my dear!"

"I haven't finished!"

"Excuse me, please! Do go on!"

"I was only going to ask you if you didn't think Abigail was conveying the fact that hereafter she hoped to learn how to be—well, shall I say slightly less violent in her manner of fulfilling her fortune?"

"She made it very clear, I think," smiled Jocelyn sympathetically. "Abigail is so clever she can learn from her mistakes—they say that's the hardest thing any one can do. But Doris has done it, too, Viola.

Look how she named our bell, exactly right; and look at this wonderful program she has arranged without trying to get a single bit of glory out of it. I do wish I might be able to learn that same way."

And she never realized that she had done it—our happy-go-lucky Jocelyn whose own determined effort had caused her to rise like a star out of clouds to lead us all ahead! But before I could say a word, an electric peal rang through the building. "The signal!" cried Jocelyn, springing to her feet.

Up all the staircases came the tramping of many feet, and as we hurried out into the hall the procession was already forming to ascend to the belfry. There was only a faint buzz of conversation at first, which died down as we fell into line. Then we heard the door to the roof directly above us thrown open, and the school band, which was stationed up there near the belfry, began to play a march.

Slowly the procession began to move upward, and when we stepped out on the roof,

what a splendid sight met our eyes! The gilded belfry shone dazzlingly in the mild sunshine, a great array of finely-clad guests, including the mayor of Daskam himself, already waited at one side of the belfry, and inside the gilt dome we could catch a glimpse of Something that must have been hanging from the top of the bell-frame, for over it was flung on one side the Stars and Stripes, and on the other the city of Daskam's sea-green flag with its white-sailed ship and its crimson rose, while beneath it fell the folds of the green-and-white banner of the school.

The band played louder and louder, as we all paraded around the belfry in honor of the bell, which we had learned was a custom among townspeople long ago when they celebrated the coming of a new bell to their town. And as we passed the fourth corner of the tower, just before forming into a hollow square, each of us received a beautiful souvenir,—a lovely program printed in the holiday colors, given to us by our local

school-board to remember the day of triumph.

We halted in formation, the music ceased, and Mr. Lane began to speak. He said it was a joyful occasion for the school, for Daskam, and, he personally thought, for the whole United States, when girls and boys gave such a dazzling and united example of how to start the New Year right! Then, having got us all happy, he introduced the mayor, who was very jolly, fat, and nice.

"I always expect to learn something when I go to school," said he, "and this morning I am not disappointed. I learn that I am to act the historic rôle of the burgomaster who welcomes a bell presented to his community. And while not very learned, I fear, in the ways of burgomasters, I will welcome this beautiful and fitting gift to the very best of my ability. Girls and boys, I congratulate you on your generosity, your thoughtfulness, your industry, your patriotism, which have prompted and achieved this gift. I understand it completes our

set of chimes in a unique and charming fashion. I rejoice with you all that we shall hear their voices again this morning, for these lend a harmony to our life together which every one of us has missed while they were forced to be silent. And when the gift is revealed, let us not forget that the beauty of a bell can lie deeper than its form, no matter how exquisite—deeper than its sound, no matter how sweet; the deepest beauty of this bell of yours lies in the message that it will ever speak to your hearts."

As he ended, Helen Edson and Rand Potter stepped out from the ranks on opposite sides of the belfry, approached the veiled part of the bell-frame, and each pulled a cord. The flags fell to the lower bell-frame, and "Freedom" was revealed before us!

That dear, bright, shining little bell hanging last and highest of all the chimes! Not one of us will ever forget our first glimpse of it. There was a moment of stillness, and then Jocelyn, whose moment had come,

stepped from the front rank, and, facing both the guests and the bell, spoke clearly, sweetly, and without an effort:

"Honored guests and teachers—dear comrades! To our new school, the gracious gift of our fair and noble city, we students of Daskam High School present this bell.

"O Bell! We name thee 'Freedom.'

"May thy voice ever sing to us the sweetness of thy name.

"May thy song ever challenge us to guard our freedom with joyful courage, obedience, and love."

That was all she said; then she stepped quietly back into her place. Yet we felt that she had not only fittingly dedicated the bell, but that somehow she had dedicated us, too.

CHAPTER XIX

WHEN "FREEDOM" RANG

THEN the band struck up again, and we all sang "High on a Hill above the Sea," the music ringing out beautifully through the clear air. And after that we came to the last number on the program, the "ribbon ceremony" for the bell, which was as pretty and merry as could be. Two boys and two girls, each representing one of the four classes, tied tricolored ribbons on the bell, decorating it and saying a charm in four couplets which Doris had written specially:

"Red, white, and blue,
Ring north, ring true.

"White, blue, and red,
Ring south, end dread.

"Blue, red, and white,
Ring east, send light.

"Tri-color clad,
Ring west, be glad!"

We took one final look at the bell, and then again to music we began to retrace our steps into the building, well satisfied with our presentation ceremonies.

In the hall we broke ranks, and Jocelyn and I decided, with many of our companions, to go downstairs to the front hall and enjoy the mural paintings there again until the chimes should begin to play, which, we had heard, would be at a quarter of twelve. As we walked down the main staircase the clock in the main front hall struck once—it was half-past eleven. Several people simultaneously cried, "Fifteen minutes more!" And several others turned to Jocelyn and told her they had liked her "speech" very much.

"Did you write it all yourself?" asked somebody.

"Yes," said she, "but I thought I should die before I did it!"

"Why, it didn't sound hard!" cried somebody else—the usual person, no doubt, who can be counted on to say such things.

"When did you get it done, Jocelyn?" I asked.

"Yesterday morning. I got perfectly desperate," she confessed, "and then suddenly it all bounced into my head at once. I wrote it down and showed it to Mr. Lane, and he said it would do very well and not to change a word of it."

By this time we had turned on the first landing, and started down the last half-flight of steps. And just at that moment we saw, through one of the great windows flanking the front door, an automobile slowing down at the gate. Mr. Lane, whom we had seen excusing himself upstairs to the mayor's party, flashed down the steps beside us, and hastened down the front walk toward the automobile.

Next minute we recognized, alighting from it, a pleasant-looking gray-haired gentleman. It was Mr. Pollock, the artist whom we had met that evening he was working on those very paintings beside us. No doubt he was invited to the luncheon

which would so soon begin, and had come early to inspect the building first. But before we had had time to hope that he might see us and speak to us again, he had turned and begun to assist from the car a tall young girl who had on a wide black hat and a long yellow sport cape!

"Viola, Viola!" gasped Jocelyn, clutching my arm wildly; "she's here, she's here!"

As if I didn't know that!

"I told you we'd see her again, didn't I? *Didn't I?* And O horrors!"

"What's the matter?"

"That book's in my desk in the old building!"

"Well, why the horrors? You can get it better than if you had left it home."

"I probably couldn't get it before she'd be gone again!" groaned Jocelyn, apparently disheartened by so many unsuccessful near-encounters with this girl who, quite unconscious of all our emotions, was now coming up the walk between Mr. Pollock and Mr. Lane.

"Now don't lose your nerve," said I firmly, as this seemed to be one of the rare occasions when I could order Jocelyn around. "Watch me fix this!"

I looked around the crowded hall for Archer Macklyn, whom I had seen there just a moment before. Finally I saw him, beckoned, and he came over to us.

"Who's that girl?" I demanded, nodding toward the walk.

"With Mr. Pollock—the man in the gray overcoat? She's his niece, Miss Hope Seaborne," answered Archer.

The trio entered the building, Mr. Lane leading the way to the elevator, with all eyes on him and his guests, and once more Hope vanished from our view! Archer remained to chat a minute.

"They've been at the hotel some weeks while Mr. Pollock was painting these pictures," he informed us. "Miss Seaborne's quite artistic herself. She's going to be a photographic artist, I hear. She's studying for such work already, for while her uncle

was busy painting, she was a pupil at the Malden School of Photography here in Daskam."

That was all most interesting, and it was much to Hope's credit if that famous school would accept her as a pupil, but Jocelyn's mind was on just one thing. She had got all her nerve back quite miraculously, and was resolved to get acquainted with Hope this time or perish in the attempt, as the saying is.

"O dear!" she cried. "I've got a book belonging to that girl which I want to give back to her, and it's in my desk in the old building. You stay here, Viola, and watch for her while I go and get it."

"Hold on, I'll get it for you," offered Archer, as I had been sure he would. "I can do that faster than you can, and you know she may be going in a minute, for it's getting on to time for the luncheon. She can't be invited to that, and everybody who isn't will have to clear out at noon."

So Jocelyn gratefully told him which book

it was in her desk, and he hurried out across the street. And though he had but little time, and the building was closed for the holidays, and he had to ring the bell and wait for the janitor and explain why he wanted to go in, Archer did just these things and did not scale a tempting fire-escape and enter through a window, as once he would unquestionably have done without a thought, and probably now refrained from doing, as he was a perfectly normal boy, with much self-restraint and numerous regrets. But the point was that he did refrain from so doing, and was remarkably speedy on his errand into the bargain. For the few minutes he was away we kept a sharp lookout in the direction of the elevator, to watch for Hope's return, standing near one of the big windows to signal him, if possible, to hurry, in case we saw her. But he appeared first, and when Jocelyn saw him coming across the street she began to take great credit to herself for having had the fortune-book in school instead of at home.

"It's here because of that class-theme we had assigned in English just before the holidays, you remember," she explained—"'My Favorite Book,' you know. I brought it along to refer to."

Then Archer came racing in, and still Hope was nowhere to be seen. And then, just as he put "Your Birthday Fortune" into Jocelyn's hands amid profuse thanks, high, high above us rang out a deep golden note of music!

Then, amid the joyous silence that suddenly filled the whole building as we once again heard the voices of our beloved chimes of Daskam, came another and a deeper note, then one still deeper, and then the song swelled up, up, and up—it was "The Star-Spangled Banner!"

Never before had we heard it on the Daskam chimes—never, until "Freedom" rang! And never should we have heard it if we girls and boys had not learned through our own experience that we were freemen because we were bound by common laws of

welfare and good. I don't think any one could ever have felt more deeply than we did the beauty of that national anthem of ours, as we stood far down below the ringing bells, listening to the hidden music. You could see every scene flash by you: the dawn's early light—the broad stripes and bright stars in full glory reflected on the stream—the ramparts—the rockets' red glare—the bursting bombs—and, through everything, the Flag, still there. So all the bells of "Loyalty" played the anthem of our country's greatness, and "Freedom" completed the song!

The last reverberation died. For a long, never-to-be-forgotten moment, a beautiful solemnity hung over the hall. We looked at each other's shining faces, we looked at "Ourselves," the spirited boys and girls on the walls, all their colors gayer than ever in the noon sunshine, and we knew that such as they ought indeed to be able to make a land of the free and a home of the brave. Our gaze swept the whole series of pictures

that stretched around the hall—across the landing—and then, suddenly —

Right down on that landing, all by herself, tall, stately, friendly-eyed, stepped—Hope Seaborne!

CHAPTER XX

IN HOPE'S MEMORY-BOOK

JOCELYN bounded forward—but she dragged me along too! Hope remembered her, smiled, then glanced at me, and I thought she seemed to recognize me also. Everybody was looking at us, interested in Jocelyn, fascinated by the picturesqueness of Hope, but Jocelyn, paying no attention, leaped up the steps holding out the horse-shoe-covered book.

"I've got your book!" she cried breathlessly. "I did so want to find you and give it to you right away, but you see if I had been able to, we never should have got 'Freedom'!"

Delight sprang to Hope's eyes as she grasped the book eagerly, crying: "Oh, thank you, thank you! But how in the world——" She could go no farther. That book was now pretty famous in Das-

"I'VE GOT YOUR BOOK!" SHE CRIED BREATHLESSLY.—*Page 280.*

kam High School, and ripples of laughter that soon swelled into a wave broke over the audience that had heard Jocelyn's remarkable utterance. "Jocelyn found 'Freedom' in Kendall Street!" cried somebody, and the walls rang again. No wonder Hope looked bewildered, though she joined very gallantly in mirth she didn't understand at all. Then we all cried: "Sh-h—sh-h-h!" and in a minute Jocelyn had explained rather incoherently how she had come across the fortune-book in a second-hand stall, and had never believed that Hope could have put it there.

"I certainly never did," cried Hope. "It's a complete mystery to me how it ever got there! But I did grieve over losing it. And how grateful I am to you for bringing it back to me!" she assured Jocelyn, her deep bright-blue eyes sparkling. "And to think that I've seen you twice before, and talked to you, and never knew you had it!"

"And I never knew you owned it until that day I was a water-girl and heard them

paging you at the hotel," gasped Jocelyn. "And oh, oh, oh, there's so much more to tell you! Dear, dear, do you really have to go away again?"

"The car's waiting," answered Hope hesitatingly. "I'm afraid my aunt expects me at the hotel."

"But Viola and I—this is Viola," announced Jocelyn, dragging me forward—"simply have got to tell you everything!"

"And I've got to hear it," declared Hope decisively. "Oh, Viola, you were a water-girl, too, and a singing-school girl besides!"

"Listen!" I cried, suddenly inspired. "If you could come home with me to luncheon, as Jocelyn is going to, you could hear everything, right away instantly! Please come. Can't you telephone your people that you have an invitation? I live on Poplar Avenue, just down the hill."

"How sweet of you to ask me—I'll just love to come!" cried Hope delightedly; and then it seemed as if the most awful thought flashed into her mind just as we crossed the

threshold and started down the walk. She stopped short, looked at me with absolute pathos, and finally said slowly:

"I don't believe you'll want me when you see—when you see ——"

"Of course I want you!" I declared stoutly.

She looked at me one single instant longer, and then burst into the merriest laugh in the world.

"Even when you see—*this?*" she demanded, and threw back her long yellow cape.

She had on *my* green dress!

"Oh, I want you more than ever now," I cried, "for you must tell me where you got it, and how you came to choose it, and if you are mad because I have one, too. And I must tell you how I saw you in that dress last October, one Saturday afternoon, looking into Harlan's window, within an hour of the time when Jocelyn picked up your birthday book in Kendall Street!"

So she finally agreed to come, and I

dashed back into the building to get the coat I had forgotten until that moment, and then Hope said we must all drive to my house and she would send a message back to her aunt at the hotel by the chauffeur. So off we drove through the clear still air, with the distant chimes playing all our old favorites behind us as the concert went on. And soon we had come up my brown garden-path with the little snow-drifts hiding here and there in corners, and into the little white house where I live, which was very quiet just then because all my family had gone driving for the day, and when we sat down I got my first real idea of what Hope Seaborne was like.

All I had known was that she was tall and dark, but now I could see she was graceful, though her movements were quick, too. Her hair, nearly black, was wavy, massed in two coils over her ears. She had very little color, but that seemed natural, for her skin looked like a water-lily petal, contrasting quite wonderfully with the deep blue of

her eyes. She was quite thin, and her features were so irregular that some people would never have called her pretty, but I thought she had a great deal of charm and was very vivid and interesting. She hadn't talked very much on the way over, had rather, in fact, seemed to be thinking very hard about something, and I quite longed to hear her speak. I wondered if she was shy.

"I suppose you first came to Daskam when your uncle was asked to paint his beautiful pictures in the school?" I suggested, as the three of us sat waiting for luncheon to be served.

"Yes, that was it," answered Hope, quite at ease. "Of course ordinarily I should have just stayed at home in Hollins and gone to school there, but last summer I got pneumonia. I was in camp and there was an accident. A little boy who couldn't swim stepped into a hole and had to be fished out and re-sus-ci-tat-ed—hoo-ray! I said it right!—and I got chilled and took

sick. So the doctor didn't want me to go to school this year until the February term, because I was pretty weak after I got well, and, as my aunt was coming to Daskam with my uncle, they decided to bring me along. And I got stronger and stronger in this splendid sea air until I was able to do some studying, and Uncle Steve had me entered as a student at the Malden School of Photography here."

"You must be a wonder if you go there," I observed respectfully. "They take only students who want to become professionals, don't they?"

"Yes, and photography is going to be my profession," answered Hope, her eyes shining. "Artistic photography is my greatest interest. And it's such a pleasure to work hard in a place like this, where you can make such beautiful outdoor studies, that I never mind dropping anything I'm doing, no matter what it is, when I get a call from one of my teachers to come and take pictures in a certain light ——"

Jocelyn sat up so abruptly that Hope paused inquiringly.

"Did you get a call like that the day Viola and I were water-girls at the Macklyn House?" demanded Jocelyn.

"Yes, I did!" Then Hope sat up abruptly in turn. "Viola, didn't you say you saw me looking into Harlan's window one Saturday last October? Wasn't I looking at that marvellous photographic exhibit there? Were you ——"

"Jocelyn and I were both alongside of you, looking at it, too!"

"Then I know now how that book of mine must have got on that stall in Kendall Street!" she declared boldly.

"Tell us, tell us!" we cried in great excitement.

"All in good time, dears!" said Hope with roguish primness. "I must prepare the scene—get the right angle on this new view of our adventures! Viola, may I please use your telephone?"

And not another word could we get out

of her then. How she laughed at us through the glass door of the telephone-closet in the hall as we danced around in impatience, imploring her to speak! But it was no use, she wouldn't, at least not to us. But she did speak to some one at the other end of the wire, and we heard her cry, "Yes, right away, *please!*" As soon as she hung up, luncheon was announced, and as hostess I deftly diverted attention to that. Then at last, just as we finished, there was a ring at the door-bell, and the maid brought in a flat square package which she said Mr. Pollock's chauffeur had just left for "Miss Seaborne."

Hope tore off the wrapper swiftly and revealed a green leather-bound book with a golden word across the cover: "Memory-Book" leaped to our astonished eyes!

"Here's the Clue," announced Hope so solemnly that she seemed to talk in capitals, "to the Mystery of the Missing Book. Now, Viola and Jocelyn, gather around, and listen to the solution!"

But we were so amazed that for a moment neither of us could move. We just sat staring at Hope. Who had ever heard of a clue arriving on the scene all by itself as a climax to its mystery? Hope laughed at us more merrily than before.

"I can't be very convincing," she cried; "you don't believe me! I assure you, girls, this memory-book will solve the mystery of the fortune-book."

"We certainly must believe you and do as you say," I declared finally, recovering myself. "Come, Jocelyn, let's gather around quickly, and end this terrible suspense!"

We gathered promptly indeed, giggling a little despite our hushed expectation. Hope quickly turned to a page headed "October 30." We gave a gasp, for that was the day, of course, when we had gone to Kendall Street.

"Go on," ordered Hope. "Look at my Daskam page."

We did. And this is what we saw:

THE DASKAM PAGE IN HOPE'S MEMORY-BOOK

October 30

(An entry in Hope's handwriting):

My favorite book may be lost, but my fortune still remains to be fulfilled:

> "All names have meanings. Learn what yours means, express it in your life, and you will find your honored place."

* * *

Two rows of funny little kodak pictures, all of boys and girls working and playing in various ways.

* * *

A copy of the musical program of our famous Singing-School.

* * *

A bright-red feather.

* * *

A beautiful photographic study of our fine new school-belfry.

"Have you seen it all?" inquired Hope, after we had gazed a long time at the page with the greatest if not the most intelligent interest. "Very well, Sherlock will now oblige! Do you girls happen to remember that the week which ended that historic October thirtieth we had a terrific wind-storm here?" We nodded assent. "Well, I have special cause to remember it, for two reasons. The first is that I'm one of those interesting people who wouldn't wake up at night for an earthquake, so that when I awoke the morning after the wind-storm I was amazed to find that nearly all the furniture in my room had been blown over on the floor during the night. And the second reason is that it was the wind-storm which made me start this Daskam page!

"You see," she continued, as we listened more interestedly than ever, "the morning after the storm was the first time I missed my fortune-book. I've thought the whole thing over since you returned it to me, Jocelyn, and it's quite clear to me now that the

book blew out of the window somehow, and was picked up by some one who, not knowing me, for of course I was a newcomer here then, and seeing the book was not valuable, disposed of it to the second-hand man, naturally enough. Well, I felt very bad over losing it, because it had the names and birthdays of all my friends in it, and I mourned sadly for a good while, for the bad weather kept me indoors until that very Saturday afternoon when you first saw me. But when I had had a walk in this lovely town, and saw how the storm had cleared off, I felt better and decided to work out my fortune whether my book was lost or not. So, as you see, I started a Daskam page, in memory of that resolution, that very evening."

"Tell us the story of the things you've put on the page," begged Jocelyn and I in one breath.

"That won't take long," laughed Hope happily, "though they're all ever so dear to me. These kodak pictures I took at home.

I put them in here because they have many of the original ideas used in the series of paintings in your school. I was deeply interested in Uncle Steve's commission here, and I showed him all my pictures from my own school and camp, and he got some hints from them. Then I loved your singing-school so much I had to include the program. I guess Mr. Lane knew it was going to be wonderful, for he invited me specially for that day, and I got Aunt Edith to go with me. And now this red feather—you'll never guess where it came from—off that crazy Indian boy's war-bonnet!"

Jocelyn and I shouted, and so did Hope, at the recollection of Rand's antics.

"You remember about the red stockings?" she cried. "And how the squire shook the Indian boy for interrupting his speech? Well, the feathers flew, this one into my lap! And the reason I kept it is because it's really a souvenir of how we came to stay in Daskam so long. You see, Uncle Steve is a nervous man, and just at

that time he was depressed—he felt his work wasn't going well here. So that evening I told him all about what wonderful, original boys and girls you all were, and when I described the Indian boy and the stockings and the feather, he suddenly burst out laughing nearly as loud as I had so disgracefully that afternoon at the show, and said he must just try to get that painting done as soon as he could after all, for certainly a lot of those Daskam young folks must be pretty good stuff!"

Jocelyn and I looked at each other without a word, but all smiles. Anyway, there was one boy who was pretty good stuff, without any pretensions, either, and his name was Rand Potter.

"And now my Daskam page is finished," concluded Hope, "by this study of your belfry. My teacher thinks it's my best piece of work so far, indeed, he said it almost did justice to your beautiful school building. So I've ended the Daskam page with it."

"No, Hope," said I, "the page isn't ended."

I got up and ran to the bookcase, where from a shelf I snatched a French text-book which we had just finished reading before Christmas, and which I had brought home, and from it I took a little piece of red cardboard, which I laid on the page of the memory-book below the picture. "You might end it with that," said I.

"Where in the world did it come from—my own rebus book-mark that I made for the fortune-book!" gasped Hope in utter astonishment.

"I found it up in the belfry in our old school," I began, and then I realized that we had been so busy listening to Hope's story that we hadn't told her any of ours. "I think," said I, "it must have blown out of your book that windy night, and been carried upward into the belfry because it was so light. But oh, Hope, more than ever this isn't the end of your Daskam story, for now Jocelyn and I must tell you all about what

your book did for Daskam, and our story really starts from that old belfry!"

So it was her turn to listen. We told her everything that had happened since Jocelyn and I came up the hill from Kendall Street that Saturday afternoon, and how thrilled she was to hear that the Daskam girls and boys had come to work out their fortunes found in her book! Of course we said little of the accident to the painting, merely indicating that we had heedlessly given our leaders too much leeway and thus involved everybody in trouble over the proposed gift. And Jocelyn told her how I had thought of the bell; and I told her how Jocelyn had suggested our working together as we had done on Red-Letter Saturday; and she made Jocelyn repeat her dedication speech, and was tremendously impressed.

"I never, never heard such a wonderful story," she declared when we had finally come to an end. "And just think, it's true. And, more than that, it's helped work out *my* fortune, too!"

"Your fortune!" said we in astonishment. "Why, how?"

"Why, you know it says," explained Hope, "'Express the meaning of your name in your life.' Now 'Hope' isn't really my first name, it's my middle name, and a surname into the bargain, for my full name is Mary Hope Seaborne. I was named after my mother, whose maiden name was Mary Hope, you see. But both my parents died before I was two years old, and my dear aunt and uncle brought me up and always called me their 'Hope.' And I've always wanted to live up to my name for them and everybody I knew, as well as for myself ——"

"And you have!" I cried, for she hesitated here, and I saw she was feeling for the best way to express herself. "You have been our Hope, too, here in Daskam! For you got us our pictures, and your book made our fortunes! She did it, didn't she, Jocelyn?"

"What perfect nonsense, Viola dear!"

cried Hope laughing. "You did everything yourselves. And how did I know what you were doing, anyway? But it's lovely of you to say so, and certainly my memories of Daskam will keep me trying to fulfill my fortune back at home now, too."

"What!" cried Jocelyn, aghast. "You can't be going away again, now we've just found you?"

Hope nodded, a little soberly. "We're going to-morrow," she answered. "I've been so happy here all afternoon I forgot to mention it. But all my uncle's work here is completed, and so we're going back to Hollins."

We were both so overwhelmed with this sad news that neither of us could say a word. I think Hope was touched. She smiled at us both affectionately, and said gently:

"You aren't any sorrier I'm going than I am to go, girls. And I'll never forget you and Daskam as long as I live!"

Jocelyn still couldn't say a word, and I

felt she was going to burst into tears in a minute. I thought Hope was going to cry too, and I knew I was, so, rallying all my powers desperately, I managed to speak.

"Well, anyway, this mustn't be the last time we see you," said I. "Of course if you're going to Hollins you'll leave on that late afternoon train to-morrow? Jocelyn, we must go down to the station after school and see Hope off."

So this proposal was seized on as a happy thought, and Hope agreed to be on the look-out for us, and then she had to take her leave. So, after all, Jocelyn and I didn't cry—at least, not until after the front door had shut.

CHAPTER XXI

HOPE SHALL ABIDE

WELL, while that evening wasn't very cheerful, the next morning was, for not only were we all in the new building for good, but we had a morning assembly in the bright big auditorium with its charming leaded windows and pretty carved woodwork. Moreover, it was the regular morning of the week for a popular program at Daskam, namely, the discussion of current events. So when Mr. Lane stood up on the platform with a newspaper clipping in his hand, as he frequently does on such occasions, we gave him our interested attention as he announced:

"I am going, with your permission, to discuss current local events to-day."

This sounded unusually interesting.

"In the first place," he continued, "it seems to me that the issue of the *Green-and-*

White which appeared yesterday is in itself an event."

And Jocelyn and I had been so busy we hadn't got our copies yet! Indeed, I had forgotten all about the special edition. But, fortunately, Wilbur was in the third row from the back, and both of us could turn around in company with all the other front rows to see how he took this magnificent compliment, while the two back rows poked him so he would turn around for them to see. He turned a strange hue, something like a purple beet, and Mr. Lane tactfully distracted our attention at once.

"I refer not only to the attractiveness of the edition," he observed, putting on his glasses,—"and I am glad, in this connection, to note improvement in the literary quality of the articles,—but also to a brief editorial which may well form the theme of our coming discussion. To refresh your memories, I will read it aloud."

So he did, and as I have preserved a copy, you may see it as it stood.

AFTER NEW YEAR'S, WHAT?

There has been a great deal of bright talk going around this joyous holiday-tide about how lovely we all are since we got the present for the new building and passed our mid-terms, but some of us, while feeling as much exhilarated as any one else, feel like asking the question which forms the title for this editorial, namely, After New Year's, What?

We are reminded of the words of the immortal Patrick Henry:

> "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know no way of judging of the future but by the past."

Ought we not to remember that our great success came when we had a definite program of something to do, and did it? Ought we not also to remember that when we didn't have anything to do we courted and won disaster?

Why can't the school definitely plan a lot of fine things to do after New Year's, and do them? Let's go to it. Don't let's be discouraged if we can't do everything we did in previous years. Let's think of the best things to do NOW, and do them WELL, so that we can answer the question thus:

AFTER NEW YEAR'S, NEW HISTORY!

Mr. Lane now took off his glasses and gazed at us solemnly.

"I should like an expression of opinion on the ideas expressed in this article," he requested.

And many expressions were forthcoming, all extremely eulogistic.

"Contrary-minded!" suggested Mr. Lane finally, without any results whatever. "Dear me, how lovely and exhilarating all this unanimity is! Then why don't you follow the advice of the closing paragraph and make concrete suggestions about what you'd like to do this year? I'm waiting!"

And we hadn't known it at all! However, when we saw he was in earnest, we made up for lost time. Our spirits began to soar as the first—suggestress, can I say?—bounded up in the person of Abigail Sims, who clamored for a grand debate to be held during February on a patriotic historical subject, an idea to which Mr. Lane gave instant approval. Then three less earnest girls got up and asked for a dance, and Mr.

Lane promised each class one before the end of the year. Some one else asked to have the interclass hockey-tournament schedule made out, and Mr. Lane told John Parker to see that that was done at once by the right G. O. committee. And then finally he said:

"It seems to me all these proposals you have made are very practical and do you credit. I take it they are what you really want to do?"

Wasn't that a funny question! Of course we all nodded.

"What you want most of all?" demanded Mr. Lane severely.

We—half-nodded!

He looked at us hard. Then a twinkle came into his eye. And then he—*laughed at us!* We all caught our breath!

"I have to contradict you," he said. "You haven't mentioned what you want most of all. And if you thus give evidence of having learned prudence and obedience, I don't see why you shouldn't have it. A

few weeks ago, boys and girls, you started to make the real history of this school year, history that should be preserved. I hope and believe that you are going to continue making it. And I think that with hard work there is yet time to provide for its proper recording in this year's issue of *Daskam Days and Doings!*"

Oh, the wild shriek of delight and incredulity that hit the ceiling of the auditorium! When your dearest hope is dead and gone and buried, to have it come back to you brighter than ever is a most tremendous experience. For a minute pandemonium reigned, then we cheered Mr. Lane until he actually got embarrassed, and when the warning-bell rang for the first class we sang the recessional all the way to the classrooms.

By recess we had settled down just enough to begin to wonder whom John Parker would appoint on the publication board. Personally, the wonderful announcement and the vistas of coming delight

it opened cheered me up greatly, and I think it did Jocelyn, too, yet in the back of our minds there still lingered all day the fact that that afternoon we should have to part with Hope.

But we put as brave a face on it as we could when we left school about a quarter past three to go to the station. The train bound for Hollins arrived at Daskam at twenty minutes of four. We had gone just a little way down the street when we heard behind us a peculiar whistle that was very familiar, low and piercing, with a funny ripple in the middle, which belonged to John Parker, as whistling is one of our excellent and good-natured G. O. president's few accomplishments. We turned. He was running after us, bristling with compasses and rulers, on his way to be coached for his special jinx, geometry, no doubt.

"Excuse me for whistling after you," he panted, "but I must see Jocelyn at once ——"

"Hoo-oo-ray-ay!" I suddenly shouted,

just like that in the midst of that peaceful stately street of homes, and I clutched Jocelyn in a wild embrace. She was horrified and tried to push me away, but John smiled kindly.

"I guess girls have premonitions," he said politely.

"I know I have," I announced, and grinned at Jocelyn.

She now blushed fiery scarlet. "Keep still, Viola; I'm ashamed of you!" she declared.

"Why?" asked John. "She's right. Will you be on the year-book staff, Jocelyn? I hope so. Everybody wants you."

Well, she accepted finally, though at first she was stricken so dumb with delight and pride over the honor that she could hardly answer. And then John strolled on down the street with us and told us who else was to be on the staff, and how the meetings were to begin that very week to make up for lost time, and described some brilliant suggestions that had been offered already in

an effort to make this year's *Days and Doings* surpass any previous one, until we suddenly realized that if we didn't hurry we'd miss the train. We broke off, and set out for the station on a run.

It was a long way off at the foot of the hill, an old building of dark-brown bricks. As we raced down, we glimpsed a bright-yellow speck on the rear platform, and, as we came nearer, we could see it was Hope in her yellow cape. She seemed to be looking anxiously in our direction, and finally dancing up and down and waving her arms at us; and then, just as we came panting down the last stretch, the whistle sounded far away across Daskam Basin, and Hope's voice reached us.

"Why didn't you come? why didn't you come?" she cried in desperate impatience. "I've been waiting and waiting, with such news! Oh, girls, such news! *I'm coming back!*"

"When, when?" we gasped, hardly believing our ears.

"In June, for the summer course at the Malden School. They've given me a scholarship. I'll be here three months. They arranged it with Uncle Steve last night. Oh, I'm so happy!"

"The only happier people in the world are us!" cried Jocelyn rapturously. "We'll have vacation then and can see you every day. How absolutely wonderfully everything has come out! Viola, why don't you say something?"

"I'm too dazed," I said. "Hope's coming back, she's coming back! She's going to stay, she's going to stay! Is it really true?"

"It's really, really true," laughed Hope. "O dear! there's the whistle again—here comes the train! Good-by, you dear girls. No, no! Au revoir!"

We waved her off until her yellow cape on the observation platform had again become a speck in the distance and then disappeared. Then, turning, we started up the hill toward home again, but neither of us

said a single word until we had reached my gate. You don't need to talk when you're perfectly happy. Finally Jocelyn broke the silence.

"Viola, there's only one thing that hasn't come right."

"I don't know what it is," said I.

"You're not on the year-book, and it grieves me terribly."

"Now that is most sweet of you, Jocelyn, dear," I said, "but truly and honestly I do not mourn one bit. I realize perfectly that my talents are not of the high order demanded by year-books, though I assure you that will not prevent my using them to their fullest extent, even if in a humbler manner."

"Stop talking rubbish, Vi, and tell me what you're going to do!"

"I am going to do what you are forever insisting that I shall do, Jocelyn Gay. I am going to perform a public service."

"No, really!" cried Jocelyn unabashed. "And what is that to be?"

"I'm going to write a history."

"Of what?"

From far, far away, through the still, clear winter air, a golden note answered her —then another—another—another!

"Of our chimes of Daskam High," I said.

And so, as you see, I have written my history!

THE END

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